

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

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## THE ENEMY'S CAMP

### CHAPTER XXVIII

CHARLES took a last look at his reflection in the water as he stood on the bridge over the lock, and decided that on the whole he would do. The resources of Oldborough had been somewhat strained that afternoon to supply the demands of three unreasonable strangers, who all wanted perfectly fitting clothes, cut in the latest fashion, then and there. This, however, the manager of the principal emporium regretfully assured them could not be; a perfect fit they could have; the latest fashion they could have, (the manager, of course, did not know of the rapidity with which fashions alter in the Metropolis and he was referring to the latest but four); but it was impossible that they could have these things on the instant. Let them give him a little reasonable time and he would match his establishment against any similar establishment in London, a somewhat over-rated city, as he hinted.

Charles enquired what the manager considered a reasonable time. Could he let them have the clothes to-morrow? The manager smiled decorously at what was an obvious witticism on the part of a prospective client, and, revolving the matter in his head, finally promised that the clothes should be ready in a fortnight. He explained that this was unusually precipitate, but as he was upon his mettle he would do it. It is to be feared that neither Charles nor his friends appreciated this offer as the concession it really was, for the one laughed, the others shrugged their shoulders, and all were unanimous in saying that they might as well wait fourteen years as fourteen days. Charles then declared that he would send his telegram after all, and the three made as if to depart.

But the manager could not see custom leaving him without a special effort to keep it somehow, and he hurriedly added that perhaps Charles would like a suit of white flannels, such as he had just made for a gentleman in the neighbourhood and not yet sent home. Now he came to look at him, Charles's measurements must be almost identical with those of the man in question, and the suit was there now ; Charles might do worse than try it on. It was forthwith produced, and found more or less satisfactory. The unknown gentleman was apparently a trifle broader in the back, but otherwise there was little amiss with the fit. Finally, despite suggestions from both the Admiral and Majendie that Charles looked on the whole more presentable in his old clothes, and that the new suit would fit either of them with greater precision, Charles became the proud possessor of the unknown gentleman's garments at a somewhat extravagant price.

This success rendered the manager more hopeful, and he remembered that he might be able to do something of the same kind for the Admiral and Majendie, who asked whether he had any more clients of about their size. It appeared that, by all that was fortunate, two other unknown gentlemen, who in point of measurement might have been doubles of the Admiral and the Doctor, were also customers of his, and in fact were at the moment awaiting two grey flannel suits. In a word, in less than half an hour the three left the shop clad in the suits of the three unknown gentlemen and carrying their old clothes neatly wrapped in brown paper, together with sundry minor purchases that are necessary to a respectable outfit. An early cup of tea was enjoyed in Oldborough's one restaurant, and then the dog-cart was taken from the stable and they drove back to Packington well content with their afternoon's work.

It was only, then, about half-past five, when Charles, feeling more like himself than he had for some time, paused to gaze at the reflection of dazzling white that greeted him from the river below, and then went purposefully on towards the encampment. His glimpse of Cicely in the morning had fully determined him to lose no more time, and he had come straight from Packington, depositing his brown paper parcel in the mill as he passed.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Lauriston were seated peacefully in the two deck-chairs at the door of the store-tent, the one smoking a cigar, the other engaged on a piece of needlework destined some day to fetch its weight, or nearly its weight, in gold at a bazaar.

Tea had been somewhat early, in deference to Cicely, who had suddenly announced that the evening was the best time for fishing, and that, unless tea was at four, one did not get any evening. She accordingly gained her evening and went off to make the most of it, promising Mr. Lauriston some very large fish. As she had already angled that morning not unsuccessfully her energy provided subject for comment, and when Agatha and Doris had departed also in the boat her uncle and her aunt talked placidly of Cicely and her doings. "The child is getting quite energetic," observed Mrs. Lauriston, threading her needle with unerring hand.

Mr. Lauriston assented. "The holiday's doing her a lot of good," he said. "She was getting rather pale, I thought, before we came down here; but I've never seen her in better health and spirits than she is now."

"It was a very good idea of yours, Henry," said his wife generously; "a complete change for all of us and an inexpensive one. We've had lovely weather too." Mrs. Lauriston was in an amiable mood. Everything had gone well since the camp had moved a second time, and she was in complete ignorance of the house-boat's return. Her party, for various reasons, had not thought it necessary to acquaint her with the fact, and once having learnt that the dreaded vessel had gone from its moorings she had not contemplated the possibility of its coming back. Moreover she had that afternoon made up her mind on the subject of the fallen willow, as Martin's laborious form about fifty yards away showed.

Mrs. Lauriston's voice, therefore, betrayed only surprise when she presently exclaimed: "Henry, here's someone coming; yes, he must be coming to the camp, the path doesn't lead anywhere else."

Mr. Lauriston looked up, and was suddenly tongue-tied, for there, not fifty yards away, came stepping briskly and clad in shining white raiment,—the magnificent Charles.

"Who is it? Is it anyone you know?" demanded Mrs. Lauriston. Fortunately, her eyes being upon the stranger and not on her husband, she did not detect his confused inability to speak. Realising, however, that she had not had an answer she repeated her question.

Charles meanwhile was getting nearer and nearer and the crisis was becoming acute. But, as will have been noticed before, it

was always in a crisis that Mr. Lauriston's military training came to his aid, and all the ex-volunteer in him awoke as he decided that if you go half-way to meet a danger it is robbed by so much of its imminence. He rose from his seat and explaining things to his wife thus, "Yes, young friend of mine—able fellow—City," he left her side and advanced to meet Charles, nerving himself for the almost inevitable crash, but feeling like some small boat tossing rudderless upon the illimitable sea, or perhaps more like some unhappy volunteer private who remains alone on the stricken field, his officers all shot down and not even an acting corporal left to superintend his subsequent manœuvres. Yet even in so grave a case training comes to aid the helpless, and even as that forsaken private will spring smartly up to attention and hope for the best, so did Mr. Lauriston keep a firm front and advance to greet his inopportune visitor, hoping that all might yet be well, though it seemed scarcely possible. All things considered the private was in better case. He had only to deal with an enemy, whereas Mr. Lauriston had to deal with a woman, and moreover with a wife, to whom he had mentioned the word City. Suppose Charles were to deny all knowledge of the City? But there is no need to dwell on coming ills, and Mr. Lauriston was determined to keep conversation as close to stocks and shares and as far from house-boats as, without rudeness, a man and a householder might.

He met Charles with a certain amount of hearty gesture which was intended to indicate, for his wife's benefit, the surprise one naturally feels at the sudden and unexpected appearance of an old friend, shook hands warmly, and then led him towards the lady.

"I thought you might possibly look in on us," he was saying as they came within earshot, and Mrs. Lauriston rose to greet the guest.

"My dear," said her husband, hurriedly, "I don't think you have met my friend"—the friend's name was a little obscured by a fit of coughing and Mrs. Lauriston therefore did not catch it. That was no great matter; the name could be ascertained afterwards, but she warned her husband against recklessly swallowing cigar-smoke in that manner.

Charles's experienced eye took in the situation to a certain extent, and he perceived that it would be well to proceed warily. Mrs. Lauriston did not appear the kind of lady to whose better



acquaintance a husband's introduction is necessarily a passport. He decided that his remarks should at first be few, though good, for he realised that the better acquaintance of the other and younger lady seen this morning might depend on the favour of this one. A hasty but searching glance round the camp had revealed the fact that the other and younger lady was not there now. "Is it permitted?" he asked, with that deferential smile that won him golden opinions wherever married ladies do congregate. Mr. Lauriston had just offered him his cigar-case, and Charles's tone implied that Mrs. Lauriston had only to indicate the proceeding by the merest glance and he would give up smoking for ever. The homage was not lost upon her, and she gave him permission very graciously. In Ealing something more definite than a mere glance would be required to check a young man from using tobacco permanently, and Mrs. Lauriston appreciated this tactful reminder of the power of her sex.

"How are Consols to-day?" asked Mr. Lauriston suddenly, true to his determination to keep the conversation away from house-boats.

"Consols?" said Charles vaguely, not of course comprehending the reason of the question. It seemed an odd one, and he looked at Mr. Lauriston to see what he meant by it.

That gentleman's eye expressed a dumb entreaty, though of what nature Charles could not be sure, and his mouth gave an explanation that was no explanation. "We don't see a paper down here," he said. "They showed a slight upward tendency a week ago, and I was wondering if they had begun to recover.

"Yes, they are recovering wonderfully," said Charles, whose knowledge of Consols was of a much less recent date than Mr. Lauriston's, but who was desirous of answering the appeal rather than the question.

"Are they indeed?" said Mr. Lauriston with interest. "They haven't touched ninety, I suppose?" He credited his visitor with greater technical knowledge than that deceptive person possessed, for Charles's conversation displayed a variety that was apt to give an impression of sound information on all subjects, a result often attendant on a judicious use of generalities. Therefore it came about that Charles was not sure whether Consols were inordinately high at ninety. But it seemed safer

to say that they had not reached that giddy height. "I thought not," said Mr. Lauriston; "they will never see a hundred again."

"Never," Charles agreed.

"How," asked Mr. Lauriston, "are West Nigerians? People seemed a bit shy of buying when I left town."

"Not going off well," answered Charles. "People are shyer than ever."

"I can't say I'm surprised," said Mr. Lauriston.

"I'm not surprised myself," Charles admitted, wondering what it was all about and when it was going to end.

"You're not touching Kamschatkans, are you?" Mr. Lauriston enquired.

"No," Charles confessed; "I'm not at all sure of them." He began to feel that this kind of conversation lacked interest, and looked at Mrs. Lauriston to see if she showed signs of boredom; but that excellent lady seemed satisfied. City talk did not bore her because she understood it to be right and necessary, and in this instance she found, or thought she found, in these deep sayings an indication that the visitor was a man of substance. He was also personable in his white flannel suit, and had not on the whole a married appearance. It was almost a pity that Agatha had gone out in the boat.

"I heard on good authority the other day," resumed Mr. Lauriston "that the London, Bournemouth, and West Coast is going in for the electrification of its system.

"Really?" said Charles.

"A fact," continued his host. "I hold some shares, and am in hopes that it will send their value up again to what I gave for them."

"There certainly ought to be a rise," Charles assented rather wearily, ignorant of the fact that a considerable portion of his own handsome competence came from this source. His man of business would doubtless have had more to say on the matter, and Charles felt that he would gladly have left all expression of opinion to him. For some time Mr. Lauriston conversed on the money-market in a similar strain, until the other realised that his supply of relevant answers was getting extremely low. He turned to the lady in desperation. "But it seems a little out of place to talk of these things in so pastoral a spot, doesn't it?" he said, hoping that the feminine desire to take a share in whatever conversation is going on would support him.

Mrs. Lauriston, however, could not be considered a great talker, unless she had something that must be said. "Men have to talk about business, of course," she decided; "and naturally you have a good deal to discuss even in the country."

"I'm afraid it must bore you very much," urged Charles.

"Oh no," said Mrs. Lauriston. "I don't understand money matters, so I never listen. My niece Agatha knows more about them than I do, and she says they are very interesting." She felt that there was no harm in putting in a good word for Agatha. This acute young business-man might perhaps be looking out for a wife of the kind that would be able to help him in his affairs, and Mrs. Lauriston, like a good aunt, never neglected her opportunities of seeking to secure a comfortable settlement for her elder niece. Cicely, of course, was such a mere child that there was no need to think of her as yet.

Charles straightway began to wonder if that were Agatha, that vision of the morning. If so, appearances were deceptive, for he would have staked a good deal on the vision's total immunity from interests of that nature. It would prove very disappointing if she too insisted on discussing the money-market and showed a critical insight into the methods of fraudulent millionaires. An impulsive feminine desire for the heads of fraudulent persons generally would be pretty and seemly; but a calm analysis of their defalcations with reasoned judgments on the vexed questions of trusts and watered stock, such as Mr. Lauriston was at that moment giving, would consort but ill with the rare charm of her appearance. Charles waited tactfully until Mr. Lauriston had dissected the particular millionaire in question, and then sought a little more enlightenment as to this gifted niece.

"Your niece does not speculate herself, I suppose?" he asked playfully.

Mrs. Lauriston was a little shocked. Ealing ladies may be intelligent, but they do not for that reason hasten to squander their intelligence in such a way. "Of course not," she answered with decision.

Charles felt that one of his few remarks had fallen short of the standard of goodness, and he hastened to try and condone it. "Ladies are interesting themselves in the money-market more and more," he said.

"So I have been told," replied Mrs. Lauriston. "I cannot say I approve of such a thing. No niece of mine, I am

sure, would ever compete with men in that way." Her tone was rather frigid. This young man was evidently one of those revolutionary persons who are prepared to admit the equality of the sexes, and Mrs. Lauriston was by no means ready to part with the consciousness of feminine superiority. Perhaps, after all, it was as well that Agatha had gone out in the boat.

Charles perceived that another of his few remarks had hardly been good, and he relapsed into silence while Mr. Lauriston dissected a defaulting solicitor, and after this had been done thoroughly he rose to take his leave. Mrs. Lauriston did not press him to come again. The more she thought of it the more she resented his suggestion that a niece of hers should have dealings in the City, and she decided that he was not the kind of person whom she could invite to Bel Alp. His manners were good enough certainly, but she was by no means so sure of his morals.

Charles walked back towards the mill somewhat dissatisfied with things in general. He had, it was true, paid his call, but hardly with the good results he had anticipated. He was vexed with Mr. Lauriston for manipulating the conversation as he had done, and he was vexed with himself for an unaccustomed failure to conciliate a lady; and lastly he was even more vexed at the absence of the other lady who, after all, could not be so very deeply immersed in business matters and whose appearance was very likely justified. He would, however, call again before long and endeavour to set matters right; he had little doubt of his ability to do so if he could once divert the talk into more reasonable channels. Thus meditating he turned into the mill to fetch the parcel which he had left there.

The inside of the mill was a scene of ropes hanging from and ladders leading to the floor above, of corn-bins, sacks, and the usual signs of industry, with a coating of flour over all. In the left-hand corner was the office, a little room partitioned off from the rest by wooden walls, and containing a desk, stool, and cupboard. Charles had, with the clerk's permission, placed his parcel on the desk, and he now stepped in to pick it up. On the threshold he paused, looking straight in front of him. The doors of the roomy cupboard were open and in it, on the lowest shelf, lay plain to view an indubitable Gladstone bag with the initials *S.H.* staring him in the face. He sprang in and seized it with an eager hand meaning to bear it off without delay. But as he pulled it

out of the cupboard it struck him that it felt strangely light, and he undid the straps and opened it. Then a sad sight met his eyes. The neatness that did such credit to his valet was gone, and with it was gone most of the raiment. The blue suit had vanished, the brown boots and the Panama hat, while the things that were left nearly all betrayed signs of use; crumpled shirts and collars, a varied collection of brilliant and ill-treated ties, all betrayed an alien and careless hand. Charles remained thunder-struck for a time, but at last recovered himself, shut the bag up, put it in the cupboard again, grasped his parcel and departed, without disturbing any of the miller's men who were all in the upper part of the mill, and without noticing in the extreme corner of the shelf a heap of old clothes that might have made things more clear to him if he had examined them. He went home puzzling over the circumstance and meditating how to get to the bottom of the mystery.

In the meanwhile he was the theme of some conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Lauriston. "A baronet?" that lady exclaimed after her husband had given a few reluctant answers. "And you talked of nothing but the City, and I thought he was a stockbroker! Henry, *why* was I not told? Where does he live? Why didn't you ask him to stop to supper?" And for a considerable time Mr. Lauriston, without mentioning the house-boat, was fully occupied in endeavouring to account satisfactorily for Charles, for himself, and for many other things not immediately connected with either. He felt that, though the baronet might condone the vessel, there were many features of the case which would make explanation difficult for a husband.

## CHAPTER XXIX

"THERE was a girl once,—but you're not listening," began Cicely.

"I'm listening very hard," asserted Talbot, looking at her a trifle uneasily. She had surveyed his notably correct attire with an interest somewhat too minute to please him, and she had seemed secretly amused. He pulled down his sleeve nervously (it was a trifle too short for his arm), and her gaze then fell on his brown boots, which he in turn contemplated with dissatisfaction. They were still a little tight; what was worse they looked tight,

and he knew it. He settled himself determinedly, however, and looked at her instead.

Cicely smiled in a superior manner, and leaned back more comfortably against her favourite tree by the perch-hole. "You'll have to listen," she announced; "it's for your good."

"I didn't expect this of you," demurred Talbot. A prolonged study of Cicely had distracted him from his minor discomforts, and he felt himself again.

"Besides, I want your advice, as I don't think the girl behaved very well," continued she.

"They never do," he assented, readily enough.

Cicely smiled again. "You speak feelingly?" she suggested. "Otherwise you can't be excused, you know."

"There are exceptions," conceded Talbot gallantly.

"Mostly exceptions," she insisted.

"I don't know; I'm quite content to know one."

Cicely accepted the compliment demurely. "However this girl didn't behave at all well," she resumed.

"Poor fellow," Talbot sighed tragically. "Did he ever get over it?"

"I haven't told you the story yet," she said firmly. "I'm going to begin at the beginning."

"What a very unusual proceeding," he laughed. Cicely's eye demanded instant explanation. "I thought you always began at the end and finished with the middle," he said. "It doesn't keep one waiting for the point; and it's a very hot afternoon."

"This isn't a novel," objected Cicely, "and it hasn't got an end yet."

"Then of course I can't hear it; I quite understand. 'There was a girl once,' I think you said."

"There were several of them," corrected Cicely, "and the others were all nice."

"And the one who wasn't was the prettiest?" he enquired. Cicely's eyes danced with merriment, purposeful merriment. He felt vaguely apprehensive, but he persevered. "They were all jealous of her?"

"They were rather afraid of her, I think; she was a very big girl." Again she looked mischievously at the correct angler. Then she paused to frame her parable.

"And who was he?" Talbot suggested.

Cicely was not to be hurried. "They all went down to—to



a little country place, and they agreed they wouldn't take many dresses and things, but be quiet and not be bothered with men."

"Not even with an uncle?" he said, becoming dimly suspicious that this was that inexcusable thing, a story with a purpose.

"No, they went down quite by themselves; and you mustn't interrupt, or I shall never get to the end at all."

"As you said there wasn't one, that won't matter very much," he observed.

"They went down quite by themselves," Cicely resumed firmly.

"Did any of them fish?" he asked.

"They didn't, but the curate did."

"And he taught them?" Talbot betrayed a slight anxiety.

"He was a very nice curate," answered Cicely circuitously; "and one of them, the big one, saw him when she was going for a walk. He wasn't fishing at all properly, so she stopped a bit and showed him how to do it. He was quite grateful because he had never caught anything before, which was rather dull, of course. And she told him a lot he didn't know."

"She seems to have been quite capable of doing that," was Talbot's comment.

"She went back and didn't say a word to anybody," continued Cicely.

"Some remnant of good feeling?" he suggested.

Cicely had recourse to a greengage. It was a deceptive greengage, and its flavour was unworthy of the honour of her selection. She put it gently down and smiled to herself; he would not interrupt much longer, she suspected. "There was another girl down there," she went on, "who hadn't quite understood what they meant to do and had packed a very pretty dress,—by mistake, of course—so the rest when they found it out protested, and the big girl took away her portmanteau in the night." Talbot started. Cicely did not look at him; instead she continued rapidly. "You see, there was a party of curates down there, and the big girl said she would be sure to dress herself up and get to know them, so she took away the pretty dress and went in it to see the one who fished, and she went in it without letting anybody know, and at last they found out and they thought it very mean of her, and—"

An inarticulate grunt that expressed many things untranslate-

able into any self-respecting feminine vocabulary interrupted the narrative. Cicely paused willingly enough ; she lacked Mrs. Lauriston's practice in continuous speech. "You said?" she enquired, the question sounding rather timidly even to herself.

Her tone restored Talbot a little. "I don't care what they thought," he declared. "What did the curate think?"

"He thought the dress didn't fit at all well," rejoined Cicely cruelly, having recovered her self-possession.

"Who's been telling you all this?" demanded Talbot with steady ferocity. "Majendie? Crichton?"

"Oh dear, he'll go and beat them, or something dreadful," thought Cicely ; and, indeed, a shy peep at him was not reassuring. Talbot both felt and looked as if a little violent exercise at someone else's expense would do him good. "No, neither of them told," she declared hurriedly.

"Someone told you ; who was it?" Cicely looked at him in admirable surprise with a dainty assumption of feminine dignity. "I beg your pardon," conceded Talbot in some contrition. But he still boiled inwardly, and picking up his rod he threw his line savagely into the unoffending river. Fortune was kind and sent a perch to sacrifice itself on the altar of indignation. The unexpectedness of the bite and the necessity of landing the fish in some measure restored Talbot's temper.

"Will this buy the information?" he said holding up the fish.

"I believe you're getting curious," she returned. "No, it isn't intelligent interest ; that's only for things that concern yourself, you know."

He had been about to interrupt ; but she held up a restraining finger. Contemplation of a very shapely little hand in a becomingly dictatorial attitude distracted him momentarily, but he persisted. "Of course I want to know when it's your story."

Cicely nodded her august approval of his altered manner. "But I don't know that I ought to tell you."

Talbot repressed impatience. "What did the curate do?" he asked with an effort.

"He told the big girl," said Cicely calmly ; "and she was very rude to him."

Talbot considered this point. "I suppose I deserved that,"

he admitted in a wholly unconvinced tone. "But did he tell the other curates?" he asked with feeling.

"I never heard of his doing that," Cicely rejoined deliberately. She smiled inwardly at his look of relief. Yes, he was being a little, just a little, well—absurd, and it was all for herself, which was quite what it should have been.

"He must have been a very nice curate," said Talbot in gratitude; "I'm sure there couldn't have been a nicer anywhere."

"I thought you didn't like curates," observed Cicely, with a little touch of self-appreciation.

"As I said, there are exceptions, and I should be quite content to know that one," he replied pointedly.

Cicely felt that, in his own estimation at least, Talbot was rapidly ceasing to possess just the little absurdity that was required of him. "I don't think you've quite seen the moral of my tale," she objected.

"You said there wasn't one," he returned.

"I said there wasn't an end, but I didn't say there wasn't a moral," she answered.

"But you mustn't put the moral before the end," stated Talbot. "Think of the fables in the copybooks."

"Remember the bargain," retorted Cicely.

"I'm not teaching you anything; I'm only reminding you."

Cicely shook her head. "I didn't want that; I wanted your opinion of the big girl."

"I'll tell you on one condition."

"No conditions," stoutly declared Cicely.

"Well, may I ask a question?" Talbot was firm.

"I won't promise anything; I've told you what the curate thought."

Talbot remembered what the curate thought, and despite himself he once more acquired something of what had been expected of him. "Did the curate's aunt tell him about the big girl?" he demanded with a sternness curiously inappropriate to the form of the question.

"Oh, do say it again just like that," laughed Cicely.

Talbot's sense of humour returned; he had had his answer. However he meant to make sure. "Did the curate's aunt and the girl who had lost her dress spend every morning looking for the Gladstone—portmanteau, I mean, in the wood?"

"Intelligent interest?" asked she, nodding an answer.

"I understand," said Talbot. "The curate guessed of course. He was a very clever curate," he added with a polite bow.

"It wasn't very hard to guess." Cicely deprecated the compliment. "You see it wasn't the big girl's style at all."

"You don't seem to sympathise with the big girl," hazarded Talbot hopefully.

"How could I? Don't you think it was very wrong of her?"

"But did the curate sympathise with her?" he returned to the charge.

"You couldn't expect a really nice curate to do that, could you?" fenced Cicely. "Besides, the other girl's shoes didn't fit her at all."

Talbot moved his feet painfully. Certainly he was beginning to feel just a little absurd, despite his consciousness of lofty motives. But, as he had evidently not been betrayed and had only been discovered by Cicely, his confidence returned. "Didn't the curate like that rather?" he enquired.

"It amused him, of course," Cicely agreed readily, "and there isn't much to do in the country."

"I expect he was really pleased if he was a nice curate," Talbot insisted. "It was all done to please him, you see."

"But he was very sorry for the other girl, and he would have liked to know her perhaps," Cicely returned with deliberation. "It was very mean of the big girl, but perhaps the other was afraid of her, you see."

"The other girl shouldn't have brought that dress," declared Talbot. "It was all his,—her fault from the beginning. She shouldn't have provoked them by wanting to get to know the curates and so have put temptation in their way."

"But only really dishonest people take advantage," said Cicely rebukingly. "The schoolmistress and the nurse didn't steal things when they went to see the other curates. They were really straightforward people."

"Was the curate,—I mean did he tell his aunt and uncle that he went fishing with the big girl?" asked Talbot slyly.

"I don't see what that's got to do with it," said Cicely loftily. She, however, had seen his point clearly and her manner became increasingly dignified.

Talbot understood that his retort had gone home, so he forbore to press it further. "Everybody would have done what the big girl did. The schoolmistress and the nurse both wanted to find the portmanteau so that they might hide it again,—only they didn't get the chance," he ended with an unrepentant chuckle.

"I don't think that makes it any better,"—Cicely was severe—"and the dress might have suited them better too."

Talbot ignored this return to the original indictment. "If you really want my opinion about the big girl," he said determinedly, "I think she was quite right. She took it away to prevent the others meddling about with curates."

"That's not a very nice way of putting it," protested Cicely demurely.

But Talbot was not to be interrupted. "It's the fact," he averred. "They didn't go down to be bothered with curates,—quite right too. Of course, when the big girl met *the* curate, that was different. She just used the portmanteau because—" he hesitated and was on the verge of abandoning narrative in the third person.

"Now you're trying to steal my story," Cicely objected; "that's too bad of you."

"I'm only giving you my opinion," he returned, "as you asked me to."

"It's rather a hasty opinion," she considered, "and you don't seem a bit sorry for the girl who lost her portmanteau. The curate was very sorry for her indeed; he told his aunt so."

"What did his aunt say?" Talbot enquired in some alarm.

"His aunt said she would introduce him to the other girl, and the curate thought he would be sure to like her; he felt so sorry for her." Cicely's voice expressed volumes of orthodox compassion.

"Oh, did he?" Talbot was indignant, but he reflected that the introduction had not yet taken place, which in some measure consoled him. "You've not come to the end though," he added.

"You don't deserve to hear the end," she decreed; "you don't think of anybody but the big girl."

"On the contrary," Talbot asserted; "I've been thinking all the time of the curate, and how nice it was of him to understand and forgive her."

"I never said he did that," Cicely returned.

"But he did though," Talbot insisted confidently.

"I think you might leave me my own story," Cicely pretended injury.

"I only wanted to find an end for it," he pleaded.

Cicely was silent for a moment. "Isn't that a fish biting?" she eventually digressed.

Talbot did not even turn to look. "Some stories shouldn't have an end," he went on slowly, "except the old ending which isn't one."

Cicely smiled shyly. However, she evaded his meaning. "The curate said the big girl must give the portmanteau back. He didn't approve of borrowed plumes."

"Or stolen sweets?" asked Talbot.

"If you like to put it that way," Cicely admitted serenely.

"He never told his aunt and uncle, you know," Talbot explained.

"He liked to be thought a good angler; it was very natural of him," she said for the defence.

"Very," Talbot conceded, "but unusual. That's why he was so nice, of course."

"It's very unusual for curates to be nice, do you mean?"

"Nothing is so unusual as to be natural. To be natural is to be nice, and I must say I like a natural curate," he ended politely.

"Have you been making an epigram?" Cicely asked suspiciously.

"I apologise," he said; "it's the fault of the curate." Cicely looked for elucidation. "Nice ones make one feel so delightfully young," he explained.

"And only very young people make epigrams? The big girl was not very young," she said reprovingly. "But," she resumed, "don't you think she ought to give back the portmanteau?"

"That depends," said Talbot judicially.

"On what?"

"On the end of the story," he answered.

"I think she ought," Cicely continued; "and I've decided what she ought to do besides."

"I expect she has decided too," Talbot said firmly.

"I must be going back now." Cicely prepared to rise.



Talbot humoured her. A few moments were occupied in disposing the perch in the basket. Then Cicely delivered her parting shot. "And the big girl ought to bring the other to the curate's aunt when she's given back the portmanteau." With that she accepted his hand and got up."

Talbot laughed. "You have forgotten one thing," he said. "The big girl didn't know the curate's aunt. Your story will have to be developed a little before that. To-morrow afternoon?" he questioned after a slight pause.

Cicely nodded.

"Then the curate wasn't really angry at all," he declared triumphantly.

"No nice curate ought to be *angry*," said Cicely, and disappeared round the corner of the mill.

### CHAPTER XXX

CHARLES returned towards the house-boat deep in thought, traversing the path among the osiers with slow steps. The sudden discovery of his Gladstone bag had for the moment diverted his mind from the other camp, and he was filled with a keen desire to know who was wearing his unexceptionable blue suit, his brown boots and Panama hat, and also why the person was doing this thing. Evidence seemed to point in one direction, the direction of Talbot, who had taken his property away. But for what purpose the brutal Talbot, who prided himself on his disreputable exterior, could be wearing the apparel it was impossible to imagine. Charles felt like a jury which is asked on purely circumstantial evidence to convict a hitherto unblemished bishop of stealing a billiard-cue, and he felt that the thing needed much more proof. Other possibilities arose before him. It might be that one of the mill-hands was taking advantage of the resources unexpectedly put in his way, and was conducting a country courtship clad in Charles's raiment. That was improbable too; among London valets and lady's-maids such a thing was not unknown, but so humorous a conceit was hardly to be looked for in the country. Yet it was not more improbable than that the rugged Talbot should have sought to modify himself. Feminine influence and Talbot, of course, were things that

Charles would never have associated together even for the sake of argument. The whole thing was a great puzzle, and he resolved to consult his new allies, Majendie and the Admiral, who might be able to offer some plausible explanation.

He found them still sitting over the remains of tea and conversing with William, who seemed immoderately amused about something, and who when he saw Charles's resplendent white suit relapsed into a fresh peal of laughter. As a matter of fact he had just been the recipient of certain rather unwilling confessions from the Doctor and the Admiral, consequent on his unsparing criticism of their altered appearance and his pertinent enquiries as to the reason for it. Charles looked at him rather blankly ; he had been prepared for reproach, and even contumely, but hardly for boisterous mirth. Moreover his allies had made no confession to him, and he therefore missed some of the humour of the situation. He received no enlightenment, for William, after recovering himself, went away to fish, leaving the well-dressed trio together.

"What was he laughing at?" demanded Charles, when he had gone.

"You," said the Admiral succinctly. The extorting of confessions had not been done without discomfort to the persons concerned, and he was glad to be able to distribute it a little more evenly.

"Why? I don't understand. What's the matter with me?" Charles enquired suspiciously.

"Oh, nothing ; is there Majendie?" said the Admiral.

"No, nothing at all," the Doctor chimed in readily.

The seeds of discomfort, once sown, are of rapid growth. Charles put a hand up to his tie, which felt all right, glanced at his white suit which, so far as he could see, looked as right as it was in it to look. There was nothing much amiss with his white boots either, and altogether the reason for William's laughter seemed hard to discover. He decided that the only dignified course was to ignore it. "I've found my Gladstone bag," he announced as the most effectual method of diverting the conversation and so avoiding further uncomfortable mystery.

He was successful and the others were plainly impressed. "Found it? Where?" they exclaimed together.

"Not far away," said Charles. It would not, he thought, be politic to divulge the precise locality as yet, and besides a little

unsatisfied curiosity might be good for them, as well as a just return for the discomfort they had caused him.

"You needn't have gone to Oldborough after all," said Majendie.

"I shouldn't have found it if I hadn't," Charles admitted; "and besides the clothes are gone out of it." This elicited demands for further particulars, and he proceeded to tell them of the condition of the bag when he found it, and of the obvious signs that someone had been wearing the clothes for some time.

"It can't be Talbot," declared the Admiral when the narrative was finished. "He spends all his time fishing, and you know what he is about clothes even in London."

"Unless he's gone mad," suggested Majendie rather hopefully. "He seemed queer that day we moved from the other place, if you remember."

"He wasn't mad at lunch anyhow," said Charles reflectively. "He very nearly found out that we were going into Oldborough." It had in fact been the case that Talbot had noticed an air of conspiracy about the three, but he had not troubled much as to the nature of the plot. An absorbing interest is apt to lessen the importance of other things, and the prospect of seeing Cicely a second time that day had indisposed him for searching analysis of other people's business. A giant running his course takes no notice of pigmies, and Talbot felt himself, by reason of the recent exaltation and ennobling of his character, to have become no inconsiderable giant,—when not actually in Cicely's presence. When he was with her it was different. In some circumstances a woman by taking thought is able to abstract several cubits from a man's mental stature.

"The insane often display a species of cunning which is deceptive," urged the Doctor, adjusting his eye-glasses. But his theory was not favourably received. Neither of the others felt that they could impute madness to Talbot, though it was difficult to connect him with the occurrence by any other method of reasoning.

Charles, however, had thought out a plan by which it would be possible to arrive at the truth, and settle the identity of the ass who was wearing the lion's blue suit, brown boots, and Panama hat, as he vaguely phrased it to himself. "I've decided what to do," he said.

The others looked to him for enlightenment. "A watch must

be kept," he continued, "all day. We will do it in relays. Whoever it is, is certain to go into the mill at some time or other. If it's Talbot, whoever is on guard must follow him and see where he goes to and what he does. If it's anyone else just knock him down and sit on him, or bring him along here so that he may be talked to kindly."

"How about the clothes?" asked the Admiral. "You don't want to knock your own clothes down in the mud, do you?"

"I don't care about the clothes, of course," said Charles rather loftily. "One could not be expected to wear them again, so it doesn't matter what becomes of them. It's the theory of the thing that matters. Whoever the person is, he's got to learn that he can't go about in another man's clothes with impunity."

"Supposing it *is* Talbot?" asked Majendie, who foresaw, in that contingency, some difficulty in imparting the piece of information suggested.

"Oh, if it *is* Talbot," began Charles, and then hesitated. He also saw the difficulty. "Oh, well, in that case one will have to consider the next step; it doesn't do to be precipitate. But let us hope it isn't," he concluded.

"It would be much easier to deal with a stranger," the Admiral admitted.

"Well then," Charles went on, "it's agreed. You, Admiral, will take the first watch from nine till eleven; you, Majendie, will come on from eleven till one; I'll get Lauriston to take the afternoon with me; and we'll divide the evening among us."

Majendie and the Admiral looked at one another askance. The prospect of spending a morning in the manner suggested did not commend itself to either of them; indeed it was impossible, for they had made other arrangements. The fact that but a week more remained of their holiday had had some effect on their view of things, and they proposed to spend this week to the best advantage. There might possibly be some advantage about Charles's scheme, but it was not the best, and it did not really accrue to them. "I can't manage to-morrow, I'm afraid," said Majendie. "I don't mind an hour or two on Sunday morning."

Charles regarded him with surprise. "Why can't you manage to-morrow?" he asked.

Majendie was perplexed for an answer. He had no immediate wish to take Charles into his confidence ; one confession in a day is enough discomfort for any man, and it was not necessary to begin another, for William had yielded to persuasion, entreaty, and threat, and had promised to keep his own counsel about what he had heard. He accordingly decided to equivocate. "To tell you the truth," he said with a great show of candour, "I want to fish to-morrow."

"All day?" enquired Charles, his surprise in no way diminished. Majendie did fish sometimes, but he had never been known to do so with conviction ; it was understood that he merely took out a rod when he had nothing better to do. Charles was of the opinion that the employment suggested by himself was a good deal better, and his tone expressed it.

"Well," explained Majendie with growing frankness, "I want to score off Talbot. I've found some tremendous great fish,—chub—in a certain hole, and if I could catch one or two it would make him look small. They're much bigger than anything he's caught ; and besides he hasn't caught many lately, so it would be a double score."

"You won't score off him that way," said Charles sceptically. "You won't catch them, and if Talbot sees you fishing he'll find out where they are and *he'll* get them, so it will be a score off you. I wouldn't give him the opportunity ; much better not let him know anything about them."

But Majendie was proof against Charles's insidious reasoning. "I'll promise you he shan't know about them," he replied ; "but I mean to catch them myself if I can. Time is getting short, too ; that's why I want to begin to-morrow."

"The shorter the time the less reason for wasting it," argued Charles ; but the Doctor was determined and would not consent to Charles's programme.

The other then turned to the Admiral. "At any rate you don't want to fish," he asserted.

The Admiral admitted it, but it seemed that his time also was no less fully occupied, "I've got to finish a series of sketches I'm engaged on," he said.

"Sketches!" exclaimed Charles in a tone of indignant contempt. He was beginning to doubt the reality of the professions of good-will that had been made to him a short time ago. They would not, it appeared, stand the test of practical utility. "A

holiday task?" he enquired sarcastically. "Let us have a look at them."

"Not until they are finished," the Admiral answered firmly; there were difficulties in the way of exhibiting them, not the least being that they were not his own or even in his possession. "I will show them to you some day," he conceded with a swift mental vision of a tasteful drawing-room of the future whose walls should be appropriately ornamented with water-colour landscapes, the joint work of a certain gifted couple, and the admiration of all persons of culture.

But Charles, knowing nothing of the drawing-room, somewhat warmly denied any real desire to behold the masterpieces, intimating that he had asked to see them in a spirit of irony, and that the Admiral was too obtuse to appreciate that fact. The Admiral was moved to retort, and a brisk discussion ensued, after which Charles departed, saying that he ought to have known better than to expect any assistance from two persons so self-centred and so narrow-minded as his friends. Herein he judged them hardly, as, had he been acquainted with all the circumstances, he himself would readily have admitted. But, since he knew nothing, he departed in dudgeon to bathe, and to scheme vengeance against the unknown purloiner of his raiment.

*(To be continued.)*



## TECHNICAL EDUCATION

THE proposals to establish two institutions to give technical education in branches of applied science superior to that at present offered in any public college in this country, has again brought the subject of technical education before the public. Of late years the working man has monopolised the attention of the benevolent and the charitable.

There is much diversity of opinion as to the value of technical education to workmen. Many contend that a workman ought only to do the manual work he has been trained to do, and that those above him should do the calculating and designing. On the other hand, people in general take it for granted that the more intelligent a man is the better workman he will be, and also, that of any two workmen the one who has some technical education (other things being equal) will be the most valuable. The inference that improved technical education will enable us as a nation to keep the lead in commerce is not clear, as will be shown further on.

For good, or for ill, there has been an economic change in this country, from agricultural production to commercial production; we have gone from the plough to the factory, which sucks into its gorged system half the life, blood, and bone of our rural districts. A change has taken place and is still taking place, and it is useless to attempt any solution which ignores such a change. Education has done much to prove the absurdity of the contention that "the poor should be contented with their stations and not aspire beyond them," and the combinations of labour have done the rest.

The higher education of the apprentice is advocated; but are we prepared for technical education? Has the elementary education of the apprentice proceeded upon rational lines so that he is competent to appreciate the higher education given him, or

offered him, as a technical student or as an apprentice? Mr. Balfour's address at the opening of the Manchester School of Technology was chiefly interesting in that it impressed on the public at large the need and the reasons for technical education; but he said "that he more than doubted whether the students were mentally equipped to profit by the instruction there to be given." This is a principle which has hitherto certainly not been sufficiently grasped.

The attitude of the workman of the present day toward technical education is a difficult one, his utilisations of it being hampered in many ways. Applied theory, like applied art, vexes his soul. The pity is that workmen are such mere workmen, and that employers, generally, are such unmitigated employers.

A great deal is heard about the loss of our commercial position, and especially about the great strides made by Germany. But what has technical instruction done for Germany? Lord Rosebery said in a speech some time ago that "Germany was twenty years ahead of us in technical education." That may be, and although Germany was probably the pioneer in technical education, yet *made in Germany* is notoriously synonymous with *cheap and nasty*, and even Russia can produce better articles than Germany. Russian sugar, for instance, is far superior to German, and Russian cotton textiles are better and more durable than German. In a recent report our Consul at Stuttgart states "that at the present time the more German manufacturers exert themselves to find a market for their goods, the less their profits become"; and a more recent report implies that Germany's rise has been bought at the cost of the physical degeneration of her workers.

Technical education is not the panacea for all the ills that trade is heir to; there will, of course, be cycles of commercial prosperity and depression, as there always have been, in the best technically educated country. Commerce is able to work veritable miracles, bringing into contact the extremes of civilisation, enlarging and disseminating ideas, and helping forward that universal peace and goodwill which is, and must be, the highest ideal of humanity. The captains of our great commercial enterprises must by intelligent anticipations forecast and create means for the productions of to-morrow. Our workmen must therefore be of such a kind that they can readily and intelligently adapt themselves to the altered circumstances of to-day, and the probably altered conditions of to-morrow.

It is often proved very conclusively that the glut in the labour-market is unfortunately only a glut of unskilled or indifferently skilled labour. Such a state of things might be taken philosophically and left to the consolation which lies in the theory of the survival of the fittest ; but it generally happens that the fittest are gradually crushed out of a profession which more than many others needs education, brains, and business capacity to make it successful. How best to provide the proper antidote against the greatest danger of modern existence is a question of no mean significance. The dogma of the decadence of our workmen we have always with us, and it is instructive now and then to throw ourselves back half a century or so and to review the work of those days from the point of view of the men who lived in them.

One of the greatest needs of the day is to find some practicable method of interesting men in their work, and in promoting the successful operation of their employers. Of course to expect that men will strive after perfection or despatch solely for the benefit of the employer, or from sheer love of work, without the incentive of personal material benefits, would be the philosophy of a fool. Love of gain is an incentive to ambition, and ambition is merely vanity ennobled. If a workman knows that good execution, promptness, and prevention of waste will redound to his immediate pecuniary benefit, he is naturally apt to be more attentive ; for it may be taken as a rule of life with the average man that he will be careless, or possibly vicious, where he does not expect to be supervised or where he suffers no pecuniary loss. Such a state of affairs as at present exists, not only in this country but in Germany notwithstanding her boasted excellence, obviously proves that somewhere things are radically wrong.

A workman may acquire much information by reading, but even practical articles are so generally mixed with arithmetic and mathematics, or with technical terms, as to make the parts involving the simplest calculation unreadable and rather irritating to the average workman. A healthy, well-informed, and well cultivated imagination is beyond and above all rules. Paradoxical though it may seem, men understand less now, when they read more, than in the days when books and papers were few and difficult to obtain. Success and achievement are brought about by persistent, intelligent, and well directed effort. Effort backed up by indomitable will, courage, and hope will bring about the

most happy and gratifying results. Too often the average man, for the want of a little energy, dozes his spare time by his fire-side, and meanders through life with the elementary knowledge he possessed at fourteen, knowing barely sufficient to gain a livelihood.

Technical education is fondly supposed to be the one thing needful to produce efficient workmen ; but modern conditions of life do not tend to cultivate a disposition to work faithfully and cheerfully. The tendency of modern conditions of labour is to specialise ; work becomes purely mechanical, affording not the slightest opportunity for the exercise of thought or judgment, or arousing sufficient interest to find out peculiarities or develop special talent. Take any of our great factories ; the work is so specialised that the nearer the man is to being a machine the nearer to perfection is he as a workman.

The primary object of technical education is apparently the production of beautiful and sound work, yet scores of things occur in practice, and have to be adopted, that are totally at variance with the teachings of the technical schools. Of what use is technical education when the price of work is cut so low that the workman's abilities are hampered in order to make the job pay ? And yet how glibly, in our art and technical schools, we hear lecturers advocating all that is sound and æsthetic, while in practice we have to depart from the poetically æsthetic to the absurdly practicable and payable.

Anyone setting out to teach others a technical knowledge of their craft, whether it be to train students with a view to their practising it as a means of livelihood, or with the aim of guiding others to some understanding of what they see, should approach the subject from some point of view other than of trying to show them some main principles or guiding instincts which lead to certain results. How often we find that many of the brightest and best pupils fail from the lack of ability to put their technical knowledge to a practical use after they have left the technical school. A gulf exists between the technical school and the application of the knowledge acquired.

At the same time, it does not follow that because a man possesses a technical knowledge of his craft he is necessarily a skilled workman. Therein lies a world of difference, and it is easy to perceive how great an advantage (other things being equal) the workman, who applies his technical knowledge practically,

will necessarily possess over those who go blindly on using methods and materials without that discriminating knowledge which really means so much to those who possess it in its fulness. It is, however, only this dual and Herculean task, this firm welding together of theory and practice, in which the ultimate success of technical education lies. Workmen are not always as adaptable as they should be, and it is clear that work will follow the best workmen of the kind that is wanted.

The glamour of technical education has a strange persistent fascination, but it often leads to the slough of despond. If technical education is to mean anything, it must be put into the hands of persons having considerable experience of trade, and in a position to grasp the facts, and the present and future requirements, of the trade of the country. Scores of technical institutes are established without any scheme, and are pushed by persons who have no practical experience of trade and its continually fluctuating conditions.

Technical education on a good sound teaching basis is the great need of the age, but there is only one thing more difficult than the creation of the necessary scheme to this end, and that is the unfailing energy, tact, and requisite skill of the teachers and the technical committees to carry the ideal to a happy accomplishment. If any scheme of technical education is to be of real and lasting benefit different tactics will have to be adopted. Instead of being in such a hurry to provide technical schools it would be worth while to consider the qualifications and fitness of the teachers. The apparent qualification of a technical teacher is that he shall have passed certain examinations. Technical students are largely what their teachers have made them, and a bad examiner does infinitely more harm than a thousand stupid students. Possession is known to beget indifference in many cases, when once the edge of novelty has worn off.

At our technical schools a certain course is invariably mapped out at the beginning of a session, and certain books procured and adhered to. The instructor teaches his pupils building-construction; he teaches them architectural or mechanical drawing; he teaches them the chemistry and physics of materials, or some abstract mathematical system of proportions, often to their infinite and irrevocable loss of ability for any broader grasp; but does he ever attempt to teach wherein lies the

success of one method or system, or the failure of the other, to produce a desired result? Does he ever attempt, when teaching the theory of a subject, to apply theory in the simplest and most practical manner? Does he encourage the pupils to throw conventional methods to the winds of heaven and to think for themselves, to constantly study new methods, to derive suggestions from things that come casually under their vision, and to select those that are best fitted for their use and adoption? Any fool can do what he is told. The value of thinking is apparent in everyday life. The happiest achievements are those creative and not imitative, those that spring free, sudden, uninvited, the happy inspiration of the moment, the conception innate with the added creative power of the hand eager to achieve.

The whole tendency of modern education is to cultivate the memory, and the memory is often cultivated at the expense of the power to think. Students are taught to lay up in their minds the tabulated experiences of other people, rather than to grasp the methods and needs of the present day, and to habituate themselves to cultivate their own ingenuity and observation. Artificial memory is a useful thing in cases where the human brain is deficient in retentive powers. Professors of mnemonics teach their pupils to remember one thing by associating it with another. It is only by observation and by experiment that we can determine facts.

A much greater evil is the systematic encouragement offered by tutors for examinations to persons utterly unfitted for the positions for which they are supposed to be qualified after satisfying the examiners. Apparently dull and respectable nullity has a way of getting singled out, rewarded, and encouraged to undertake work for which it is not fitted.

It is often painfully obvious that students in our technical classes are not equal to receiving the modicums of science provided, with the consequence that many begin and few finish a session. If there is to be progress in our workmen it must be by means of a sound elementary and technical education, not only of our children, but also of those who are grown up. The present system is too narrow and too bookish; text-books are notoriously at variance on subjects which are ascertainable facts. Generally the teacher's acquaintance with the subject is only book-knowledge, and the students are crammed with facts they but half understand, soon forget, and cannot apply in practice.



They are set to work at examination-papers, often drafted by men almost as impractical as themselves. The examination-system is one of the chief curses of technical education in this country ; it tends to shape all minds to the same conventions of thought and the same intellectual methods, to paralyse the power to think and feel, which constitute the only intellectual qualities by which a man can be said to be an individuality, or in which an examination is of any real value. The object of examinations should not be to test knowledge already acquired, but to test the ability for applying it practically. To be of any real purpose they must test the candidate's experience, or his ability to think. The present system of examination depends mainly on the candidate's power of memory and his knowledge of other people's experience, that is, the theoretical learning and knowledge acquired from books. It is generally more dangerous to get a prize than to miss one.

The term *practical* is sometimes applied to an ignorant man, and the term *theoretical* to a conceited one. Determination will often make a youth become an excellent workman in spite of all sorts of hindrances ; but difficulties are obstacles to be surmounted, and should be removed from the path of one trying to learn, that he may become more efficient.

What is undoubtedly wanted is a freer interchange of international literature and methods on technical subjects. Every technical school should have a library of technical literature composed of periodicals and text-books of every country. It is safe to say that there is no technical institute in England which possesses such a library, or in which the latest methods—as of building-construction, for instance—are taught. The products of yesterday are not the products of to-day or to-morrow.

The success of technical education largely depends upon the co-operation of the employers of labour ; and instead of complaining that they are hampered by inefficient workmen and adverse tariffs they should do more to encourage technical education. The construction of every building demands knowledge and methods according to its particularity. We want to be freed from the dead formalism of the last decades ; we want a brisk and unconstrained solution of the tasks of our modern and progressive times. There lies the only way in which to produce the intelligent, adaptable workman of the next generation.

A. C. PASSMORE

## THE VEGETARIAN GUEST

To the domestic difficulties of the close of the nineteenth century,—the bicycling parlour-maid, the "between-girl" who insists on having tea at eleven in the morning, the rebellious daughters, and the cooks (in sporting phrase) very wild and strong on the wing—the twentieth century adds another for the hospitable,—the diner-out who with unbashful forehead proclaims himself a vegetarian. Ten years ago he would have found it easier to say he was a Mahomedan. At that time the word might have suggested vague notions of elderly men wearing soft hats and long hair, eating dishes of cabbages and raving between mouthfuls, or spinsters with spectacles and propaganda; but it was suggestion and not actuality. And the heretic who broke from the faith of beef and mutton was either effaced from the British dinner-table by self-banishment, or, if he found himself there, had at least to make a show of conformity.

Since then insidious changes have come about. Apart from a small but resolute set of persons whose motives rest on philosophic teaching, and those who, as patients, follow the advice of certain doctors, a considerable number of young people have been struck by a few conspicuous examples of athletes breaking from the venerable conventions and traditions of diet. The latter have deliberately, and very successfully, challenged the orthodox on their own chosen ground of sports and pastimes; and the prestige of the beef-and-beer school has suffered severe damage in consequence. This has been further undermined by the success of the Japanese against the Russians, the popularity of the former and their diplomatic relations with us drawing attention both to their triumph and the method of its achievement. The disciples of the newest faith were not slow to point out their abstemiousness and the resulting hardihood; and the movement continues vigorous.

The old-fashioned hostess, whose prejudices against feminine

bicycling, motoring, unreticent novels, and neo-Germanic philosophy have one by one been trampled on and crushed until she is resigned to almost anything, might have learnt in time to tolerate even the vegetarian in the abstract; but when he now presents himself in a concrete form at her own dinner-table the situation is one for which her education has given her no guidance. Her distress, moreover, does not arise through her limitations. She, poor thing, primarily desires her guest's comfort and happiness, not having learnt enough philosophy to know any better; and a refusal of her meat-offerings is apt to leave her bereft of resources. Sometimes a guest will dislike beef, or it will be forbidden by his doctor; a lamb-cutlet is the remedy if he is a reasonable creature. He who takes no butcher's meat is more of a nut to crack, in mixed metaphor; yet for him there is still chicken or pheasant, dressed after any recipe found in the part of a lady's newspaper that is not advertisement. But the man who will eat neither fish, flesh, nor fowl is a red-herring whose trail leads her into very unexplored regions.

So she gives him a special mess of potatoes, carrots, and turnips done as sloppily as possible by a cook with a lofty contempt for all gastronomical fanatics; and he, clearly unable to refuse it, looks ruefully at the huge plateful before him, and wonders how much he can leave without impoliteness. After which ordeal he nibbles soft bread through the courses until pudding-time. Fortunately for him suet pudding is not the mode at our dinner-table, so he can probably take his part with the rest,—if the previous dish has not altogether stricken him. But thereafter anchovy or marrow savoury gives him another period of idleness, perhaps the fourth or fifth since the beginning.

This state of things can hardly be anything but uncomfortable both to guest and hostess; and as the writer has had reason to sympathise with both, and believes that such embarrassments can be easily prevented, he ventures to put his experiences and conclusions at the disposal of those who entertain his brethren abstainers from flesh-food.

A preliminary word to the latter may be in season,—that it is most unfair for a newly-converted vegetarian, who intends to conform to his principles, not to take his hostess into his confidence when he accepts her invitation. It may be true—most probably it is so—that from the food provided other than meat he can get sufficient nutriment; but he must always remember

that this is a possibility which his hostess from her training is usually unable to realise. Beef-tea for the invalid, beef-steak for the robust, are the pillars of her simple faith ; and the guest who refuses meat is as one preferring HAMLET without the Prince. And to a certain extent she is right. The modern dinner is the product of evolution, and the proper balance of foods has been struck in the process ; the omission of the item of meat entirely destroys this balance and spoils the sequence.

The question to be solved is how far this can be rectified without disturbing the other diners. Let it be assumed that the guest has done his preliminary duty, and that the hostess is forewarned as to his aberration ; what is her best course in the emergency ?

In the first place she must, if possible, get more information. The tyranny of the word *vegetarian* has been pointed out elsewhere by the writer and others ; it gives no more clue to a man's taste than the fact that he is not a teetotaler indicates his favourite wine. For example, a dish of lentils or butter-beans, properly prepared and cunningly flavoured with mushroom, onion, and tomato, would be wholly vegetable, and its flavour might wring reluctant approval from a professional epicure ; but it might be worse poison to one of Dr. Haig's patients than the other guests' portion. And poached eggs, besides blazoning the guests' singularity in conspicuous white and gold, are entirely distasteful and forbidden to the fruitarian.

Further data therefore are required, and perhaps a nice exercise of tact in getting them without undue cross-examination of the guest or worrying his family. The rough method of cutting the knot by asking the guest's own assistance in his part of the bill-of-fare may here be noticed, but not commended. Apart from the natural embarrassment of a man asked to dictate to his hostess about his dishes and the proper way to dress them, the guest is in such case deprived of the pleasing charm of uncertainty which is the right of every diner-out, and sits down to his meal in the spirit of the school-boy resigned to his weekly resurrection-pie.

Between the one extreme of seeking no information and the other of asking too much lies the golden mean of getting sufficient and no more. Circumstances will often give a clue ; a middle-aged sportsman who has suffered from gout is likely to be under doctor's orders, whereas a healthy young man with a tendency to hero-worship may be under the influence of some

humanitarian ; the lady who holds the theory that she belongs to the lost tribe of Ephraim and dabbles in astrology will probably take nothing grosser than Brazil-nuts, unless she changes her mind between invitation and feast, and insists on a simple diet of minced beef through all the courses.

The time is certainly ripe for vegetarians to be properly classified, a task which may be commended to those in authority at their councils ; but, with the warning that some individuals may be placed under two headings, the writer ventures to give a provisional classification of his own, premising that he does not consider those who eat poultry and game, or even fish, as vegetarians at all. On this basis the widest class will include those who abstain from these foods and butcher's meat, usually from humanitarian motives. As a rule, these will eat any dish made of ordinary edible vegetables, cheese, milk and butter, and probably eggs ; these might be called inclusive vegetarians, or, better still, simple vegetarians. This is the easiest class of all for the caterer. A smaller number exclude eggs only from this list, and as the average hostess is apt to believe that eggs are the only possible substitute for beef-steaks (though even then very inadequate) the guest in this category ought to be able to let her know his peculiarity. In fact he wants a label, and the task of inventing an appropriate one may be commended to ingenious minds. The writer can only think of the hideous device of the *eggs-clusive* vegetarian and hopes someone else will be more fortunate.

Freedom of choice is still more restricted to those who follow the methods and advice of Dr. Alexander Haig and his school ; and the crippled sportsman who could convey his wishes in two unexpurgated words to his prospective hostess, when under this treatment for gout or rheumatism, would probably be grateful for the opportunity. He would then be known as a non-purin vegetarian ; and peas, beans, lentils, mushrooms, eggs, and asparagus would all be on the proscribed list.

A few persons exclude eggs, and also milk and milk-products, and these might claim that, with due regard to accuracy, they only were entitled to be called vegetarians, just as some inhabitants of the Channel Islands are reported to hold that England belongs to them rather than they to England, because they still represent its Norman Conquerors. But neither claim is practical, and the secondary meaning of the word *vegetarian*, as one who

abstains from meat but not necessarily animal products, is too firmly established to be discontinued. Literal vegetarians might be used to describe these folk ; strict vegetarians might do, but this combination has also been used to describe those who do not allow themselves to be bullied or cajoled into taking meat occasionally,—a class probably increasing.

Then there are those who do not eat ordinary garden or root vegetables and subsist on fruit (including nuts) and cereals. These may be called fruitarians. A few fruitarians include milk, butter, and cheese ; perhaps these might be described as mixed fruitarians. They would reject all such dishes as potatoes, beet-root, carrots, lettuce, celery, and so forth. As a matter of botany, or logic, perhaps they ought to except tomatoes and peas and beans ; but practically the hostess will do best to assume that these also are excluded.

To complete the list, mention should perhaps be made of those exalted persons who will eat fresh fruit and nuts only and refuse food over which the fire has passed,—a handful of occultists and mystics who would not be likely even to sit down at a table on which meat was allowed to appear. It will be assumed here that they present a problem with which the ordinary hostess is not likely to be troubled.

When this good lady has captured her vegetarian, and, if possible, successfully classified him, she has to face her practical difficulties. These will principally lie in the earlier part of the meal, and her problem is to keep him entertained, occupied, and nourished with good food within his rules while those known in the select circles of Farringdon Street by the abhorrent term *kreaphagists* are consuming their "scorched corpse" in various disguises.

One consideration that the hostess should by no means ignore is that her guest's tastes or principles should not be indulged in a manner conspicuous enough to cause him any possibility of discomfort. An opponent of vegetarianism,—the sort of person who signs himself Manly Britisher when he deigns to give his opinion to newspaper readers on the subject—might say that if a vegetarian is such a poor creature as to be ashamed of his principles he ought not to be accorded any indulgence ; but a kindly hostess should see a little further. No sensible vegetarian ought to be afraid of his diet in any company ; but he is as much entitled to the graces of modesty and polite self-effacement as



any other civilised gentleman. This modesty, and the natural hesitation of any considerate man to force opinions of his own on people plainly not sharing them, is somewhat strained when in a solemn and silent pause after the soup and before the other guests are supplied with fish, boiled or poached eggs are set in front of him,—*crede experto* !

So far as possible then, any special dishes for him should be supplied to him at the same time as others are receiving their portions, and a tactful and ingenious hostess may even set herself the task of making up his food in some resemblance to that which she supplies to her other guests. If he is an ordinary vegetarian it need not be especially difficult ; and even with the fruitarian a little dexterity with the dark brown “nut-meat” or “Vejola” might serve to deceive an unobservant neighbour and preclude any necessity for an apology, probably known by heart to its speaker.

Of course, it is here assumed that the ordinary guests will be given the food to which they are accustomed. On one occasion the writer sat down with nine other entirely unconverted people to a dinner of several courses, every item of which he could take, and all rose entirely satisfied ; but it is not everyone’s privilege to know a lady of such brilliant resource as his hostess on that occasion, and the vegetarian guest cannot at present expect such indulgence. If he is supplied with his own food unobtrusively, he should be more than content.

As a practical matter, each course may now be considered in detail. Passing by *hors-d’œuvres* which can be refused by any guest without difficulty (such things as olives, etc., might be put before the vegetarian in lieu of the usual anchovies) there will be the soup. Often two sorts are supplied, clear and thick ; and to save trouble, a simple expedient is to have one soup of which the vegetarian can partake. There are several clear soups which can be made in conformity with his wishes and yet be palatable to others,—the writer has tasted one flavoured as from meat-stock which he would have supposed an ingredient if he had not known that that was impossible—but the ordinary *julienne* and other stock-soups are too popular for innovations, and the hostess will probably prefer that the *purée* should be the chosen one. There are many good recipes,—potato-soup, artichoke and tomato, pea-soup, or even chestnut-soup for the fruitarian ; but let her carefully bear in mind that thick soup with a basis of meat-stock, though

labelled and flavoured with tomato or any other vegetable, is not "a proper dish to set before"—a vegetarian. It is possible he may take it, and also possible that he may not find out its composition, either then or later ; but to allow him to do so must be stigmatised as trickery, and a guest who found out such deception would be very well justified in refusing any further invitation from the same source. And the experiment would as likely as not be unsuccessful if tried on a vegetarian of any standing whose taste would probably be sharpened by his diet. If the taste is masked or disguised the consumer may again discover the trick by discomfort later on,—for which he will be duly grateful—because the toxins in meat act as a poison in his purified veins.

When the fish comes the vegetarian can no longer join in the same fare as the rest ; he cannot even keep himself going with potatoes and other vegetables as he can later on in the meal, unless perhaps there is egg-sauce and he eats it on his bread—a proceeding not very refined. Some light dish therefore may be provided for him. If the hostess adopts the suggestion offered above, butter-beans somewhat resemble white fish in colour and the task of turning out a butter-bean fritter, according to recipes found in any vegetarian cookery-book, to look like a fried sole would not be a difficult one. But, of course, this dish would not suit a non-purin vegetarian.

After the fish there will be at least two meat-courses which to the unregenerate constitute the serious part of the dinner ; and with proper contrivance the vegetarian may be congenially occupied. Before making particular suggestions, a general survey of the position may be useful.

The lore of proteids and albumenoids is to-day babbled in the half-penny newspapers and very likely in the school-room and nursery ; everyone therefore knows that when the ordinary diners take their meat they have their proportion of flesh-forming ingredients. The vegetarian will also require his share of proteid ; by taking an unduly large helping of cheese at the end of the meal he may be able to equalise matters with the others if he does not have a special dish, but this is not a comfortable proceeding, and the end of the meal is not the right time for concentrated nourishment ; there is a reason why cheese comes there at an ordinary dinner but it is not applicable to the vegetarian. The special dish, then, should, so far as nourishment

is concerned, be of equal or similar value to meat, and the old-fashioned hostess, who imagines that adequate substitutes for beef and mutton in this respect cannot be found, may look in any modern table of food-values and find she is very greatly mistaken. Probably the table will not convince her, and she will continue to think that there is some subtle life-giving essence in butcher's meat not contained in other nitrogenous bodies ; but the point is that her guest and his hunger will be amply satisfied by the substitute if it is palatably served to him. And she may console herself by the doctrine ascribed (perhaps erroneously) to Christian Scientists, that if certain animals think thistles wholesome, then they will inevitably find health and nourishment on this diet.

Thistles will not be included in the food-tables ; but a glance down the column of proteids will at once show that peas, beans, lentils, nuts, and cheese contain percentages for the most part higher than meat, and from these she will do well to make her choice.

An unconverted stranger who enters a vegetarian restaurant may experience a mild amazement when he hears such familiar combinations as chop and tomatoes or steak and *sauté* being ordered ; a reference to the bill-of-fare will show him that haricot chop or lentil steak is in the list of savouries, and an actual trial will teach him that chops, steaks, fritters, and cutlets are what he might call *rissoles*, made up like meat-*rissoles* or fish-cakes and usually of about the same solidity. These, as their rather absurd names indicate, take the place of meat in the non-carnivorous scheme, and alike for the vegetarian and meat-eater the chop has one function and the light and juicy tomato has another, and these functions are not to be confounded.

The ordinary savoury will have some basis of peas, beans, or lentils, and properly prepared is a dish which will satisfy any healthy person's taste and appetite. With it may be handed the vegetables prepared for the other diners, and the guest so indulged may consider himself very well treated. For non-purin vegetarians macaroni may be substituted for peas or lentils, though it is somewhat less nutritious ; or a nicely dressed dish with a chestnut basis may prove a sympathetic accompaniment to the host's latest stories.

Another point which must be remembered is that the ordinary diner has great aid to his digestion because he cannot swallow his

meat without using his teeth properly ; but from the residue of food which he shares in common with the vegetarian, all bran and husks and other incentives to mastication have been carefully removed. Even with the rigid discipline that is generously ascribed to the vegetarian, he will find an effort of will in keeping soft food in his mouth for more than a moment or two without swallowing it ; one authority has remarked that the ordinary process of taking porridges and puddings and similar food could more correctly be described as drinking than eating. Two obvious inconveniences result from this, and probably the vast majority of vegetarian failures and backsliders. In the first place, the food does not receive a very necessary preparation for its reception, and is therefore indigestible ; in the second, there is a temptation to take too much of it to eke out the time consumed by the other guests more fortunately situated in this respect. Therefore,—and this is a matter of primary importance—the vegetarian must have something to bite. If a *soufflé* or anything soft is supplied to him, it should be placed on fried toast if possible, and the present practice of supplying toast to diners instead of soft bread must be regarded also as doubly important to him. It should be seen that the supply does not run short, as sometimes happens ; and the simple expedient of cutting the pieces of varying thickness will ensure that each person can suit himself and his teeth in the matter of crispness. Triscuits and shredded wheat or other biscuits can be substituted for toast, but the latter is the simplest and best for the purpose.

And above all, and at the risk of repetition, no sloppy food, which is probably unwholesome in any case, but, if the writer's experience is any test, is more trying for vegetarians than for mixed feeders. One or two slices of boiled beef may combine with water-logged carrots, turnips, and cabbages into a nutritious meal ; but without the boiled beef such a dish is neither nutritious, appetising, nor digestible. Soft food may be enjoyed : a lentil cutlet or chestnut *soufflé* is soft, but if properly made not sloppy ; and even with these chipped or *sauté* potatoes may be given, if they conform with the general scheme of the dinner to the rest.

Another urgent counsel,—and once more, against preconceived notions—rather give the vegetarian too little than too much of his special dishes. The very foolish error that a vegetarian requires a sloppy diet of four times the bulk that a “sensible

person" takes dies hard, and leaves as a legacy the impression that he requires at least more food than the unconverted. If he was so ill-advised as to try subsisting on potatoes and cabbages, probably he would ; but on diet judiciously chosen he requires not more, but usually less than other people. The old mistake lingers even in vegetarian restaurants. The writer has seen an attractive young lady with a plateful of a patent food whose very proprietors have to warn the public that a little goes a long way, and of which a tablespoonful is a generous allowance ; this food, whose chief virtue is a gritty crispness which makes it digestible, she proceeded to make into an emulsion with milk and then consume, while her neighbour, deficient in the moral courage to explain her many mistakes, looked on helplessly. She returned the next day, looking none the worse ; but the soundest constitution will not stand this sort of thing long, and it has no part in a sane vegetarianism.

To sum up, the hostess who desires the comfort of her particular guest, and is willing to take a little trouble to this end, will supply soup which he can take with the rest, and thereafter, until the sweets, one or perhaps two special dishes for him, and dry toast,—and if he has to dispense with the special dish or the toast, let it be with the former. Such dishes will be in lieu of those with a meat-basis supplied to the other guests and composed to this end. A choice of two will also allow for the personal equation.

The sweets will probably be neutral ground for all guests, so not much need be said about them. But it must be remembered that the fruitarian does not usually take anything made with eggs ; and, a matter for all vegetarian dishes, lard ought not to be used either in frying or otherwise. Butter (or oil) is the usual substitute ; cocoa-nut butter can be obtained for fruitarians, as the advertisements in vegetarian papers will show.

Finally, a few words about the savoury. The writer suggests that, in this instance only, the hostess might allow her one guest's principles to modify her bill-of-fare for the rest, and that the savoury for all should be a vegetarian dish. In the first place, the cook who cannot make a decent savoury with cheese, eggs, mushrooms and every herb as possible ingredients does not know his business ; in the second a special dish would here be very conspicuous, which, I repeat, is to be avoided ; and in the third a pungent spatch-cock, or nicely done marrow on toast,

may transform the dinner-table for the neophyte to a moral battle-ground between principle and inclination, which no kind hostess would desire, whatever the result. The ordinary vegetarian has no craving for beefsteaks (popular delusion notwithstanding) but the savoury is the cook's last word, and subtler. One of Mr. Bernard Shaw's characters explained that she drank champagne after signing the pledge because she was "only a beer-teetotaler"; most vegetarians are of sterner stuff, but to avoid needless temptation is a sound canon.

A very slight experience of vegetarian cookery will dispel another myth,—its fabled monotony. New dishes can be invented by any good cook at any time, and a *bon vivant* who was left a large income so long as he was a vegetarian might wake up to find his existence not only tolerable but positively pleasant. If this ever comes to pass, and some wealthy and cynical testator thus diverts himself at the expense of his heir, the above hints may be acceptable to the mothers of eligible daughters and all other hostesses,—including those from whom at least one vegetarian has received sympathy and consideration to which a fanatic, and therefore a nuisance, has but the scantiest title.

ALFRED FELLOWS.



## SOME OF MY FELLOW-WORKERS

He is a small man, curiously lean, with a white face and rather nervous eyes. His somewhat ragged hair is iron-grey, and his chin peers out through a straggling wiry beard of the same colour. He is a relic of the old days, is almost entirely self-educated, and writes a strikingly good hand. Such is the man whom I will call Henry,—because it is not his name.

He possesses a curious and most striking dignity, or reserve, which never falters or is slackened. During all the years in which it has been my privilege to know him, I never remember hearing him indulge in chaff even with the few veterans who were his peers. Sometimes, very rarely, he will crack a joke, so mild and restrained that it would pass unnoticed were it not for the little thin nervous laugh of amusement with which he greets it. But as a rule he is very silent, content to do his own work with exactness, and still, after long years of disappointment, expecting as much from all beneath him. Very quiet and silent, with something of nervousness in his eyes, as I have said, he is yet capable of being aroused to an anger rather terrible by reason of its rarity. I have seen him cow and silence Thomas, of whom more anon, a noisy veteran whom I had deemed unquenchable. But a curious light came into the grey nervous eyes, and a certain rather shrill note into the quiet voice, and,—the rest was silence.

It is his habit to qualify all statements with an almost annoying prudence, but I can say with truth that in the space of ten years he never ran down a fellow-worker in my hearing or strove to injure high or low by word or deed. Oh grim recesses of London's countless busy hives, how many do you harbour within your grimy walls of whom that might with truth be said?

He dwells in my memory very pleasantly, the best of the many worthy folk with whom it was my lot to work awhile. I can see him very clearly now,—the long day ended, the last of all to leave.

He passes homewards in his well brushed threadbare overcoat and his shabby but self-respecting hat, carrying in his hand his aged umbrella neatly folded. He seems to stand for brave work bravely done, for a good fighter still struggling against the foe. The clamour of battle will be ever within his ears, for wife and family may only be supported by bitter unceasing toil ; but with all my heart I wish him rest at last.

A very different type is the worthy whom I have called Thomas. His is a tongue that never tires, a familiarity that is ever swift to develope into impudence ; an ill man, perhaps, with whom to jest if you have dignity that you would sustain, for he clutches his ell of familiarity with greediness and,—his voice carries far. He is a little bald man, with a white pointed beard, still active and of cheery humour, although he has passed through many vicissitudes. He is a packer now, and likely to remain one while his strength endures and while he can restrain his unruly speech ; but once he drove his own van about the northern suburbs, retailing oils and sundries. He speaks yet with sudden, short-lived sadness of those brief halcyon days. I can imagine that the business prospered for awhile, for he wags a persuasive cheery tongue, and admits frankly that in his day he possessed strange attractions for women. He has married twice and has brought up some nineteen children, to which fact may no doubt be attributed the eclipse of his brief prosperity. Such luxuries must ever be expensive. How he has done it, how he has fed and clothed that gigantic family upon his four and twenty weekly shillings, only himself and his wife could tell ; and I suspect that their minds are something of a blank upon the subject. But they have wrestled along, and he is always cheery, although such conflicts must leave scars, and although the unequal struggle still endures and must endure until his death. He told me once, with a momentary sobriety, that he was sixty-five and hoped to die at work. There are no pensions in the average London warehouse, and there are many workless men who clamour round the doors as a man's hands begin to shake with age.

But I think that the wind is tempered to him in a measure, that like most of London's workers he does not care to look beyond the daily round. He is a ferocious smoker in his scanty leisure, and, with his paper and an occasional twopennyworth of gin before him, I do not think that he gives much thought to the shadows looming ever nearer. He gave me a description of

his Christmas dinner one year that left a definite impression of almost careless jollity in my mind. Such families seldom taste beef, but it was tasted then. It seems to have been a reunion, a sinking of long-drawn feuds, a determined snatch at happiness under difficulties, that would have charmed the heart of that lover of his kind, Charles Dickens. It was a common feast to which each guest contributed his portion. Thomas, the host, provided "the bit of beef," the brother-in-law (a truculent but cheery soul as I gathered) was responsible for the bread and potatoes, and yet other relations paid for the pudding and the bake-house cooking. And crowning triumph of all, a timely present had enabled Thomas to purchase a bottle of whiskey (unspeakable in quality as I should guess), and with this they made high revel. He told me that he rose at the head of the table when the meal was ended, and said a few words of his hopes for the coming year,—before they settled down to the whiskey and a game of chance in which the veteran's skill and experience almost produced ill-feeling. But I needed no telling to know that Thomas would never let slip such a crowning chance of "saying a few words." He is a voluble politician leaning to Socialism, and an ardent listener to the speakers in the Park,—but I have written enough of the cheery brave old fellow. I will add only that he is a splendid worker for all his years and, perhaps, his own worst enemy. Good luck to you, Thomas, and may the gods be good to your giant family, if your prayer is answered and you die in harness with your sword aloft.

He is a far younger man and unmarried, the typical Cockney whom I will christen David. A feather-weight, thin and slight, but able to lift great weights by his wonderful dash and energy. He will throw himself, as it were, upon a great case or package and compel it by his pluck to move. A typical Cockney one likes to think him, in his sturdy unbending independence; a man who will refuse a gift with rudeness, rather than be beholden to any human being. It sounds absurd, I will admit, but there are still such men abroad.

He is a man not over easy to deal with, for reproof is abhorrent to his nature and to his eyes he is never in the wrong; but he is one who, even in these days of Trade Unions, seems to find a certain harsh joy in savage work for its own sake, and who will hold to it with no thought of whistles or stated hours. Yet although

he will work on with no thought of extra wage when others have departed to their homes, the short interval for tea is very sacred in his eyes, and it is well that this should be respected. He is a man of few weaknesses, slightly cruel at times, and little given to confidences; but he told me once that he had always wished and intended to go to sea. "Then my father died," he added, "and somehow I and the sisters clung together and got on,— somehow"; few words and bald, but possibly a stern struggle lies hid behind them. I think that struggle entailed steady absences from school, for his writing is villainous and his spelling worse. This will always hold him down for all his natural sharpness, and he knows it but takes no steps to remedy his deficiencies.

It is curious the things that make appeal to these strange folk. There is a certain song of the crudest pathos, sung to rapturous applause by a veteran comedian of the East-End music-halls. I have heard that song many times, and ever has it been encored even to the weariness of the singer. I strove once to glean from David the secret of its undoubted fascination for himself and all his fellows, but he could tell me little. "He didn't know, but somehow it was fine," was all that he could say. He is something of an anachronism, perhaps, in these highly-educated days, but I part from David with regret, as a man possessing in some degree the ancient English virtues for all his faults.

Wiry, black-bearded and bald, with a pleasant, half-humorous, half-weary face, Michael is a veteran upon whom long years of exacting work and many private troubles have left few traces. He is one who in his toil has burnt the candle at both ends with regularity, and I have often wondered at the man's industry and endurance. For twenty years and more he was a scene-shifter and general handy-man at the old Britannia Theatre, departing thither when his long day at the warehouse was ended. Starting from home at half-past seven in the morning, and returning by midnight, this would mean, as a regular thing, a sixteen-hour day with but brief intervals for food and rest. Think of it, and gasp your horror and indignation, ye heroes of the Unions and of countless strikes! Of course, by these heroic measures he was freed from the weary struggle with poverty which presses so harshly upon all his fellows, but it is a strain which only the toughest could endure. In addition, his home life was for many

years wretched beyond all words. Imagine the joy of returning, utterly weary, after your sixteen-hour day, to find your home stripped of everything that could be pawned, and your wife a snoring heap of drunkenness. It is a picture that scarcely bears contemplation, yet such was Michael's constant and by no means unique experience. He is a man naturally of somewhat violent temper, but I believe that he bore all things with a sort of sullen, uncomplaining patience, and with no thought of abandoning the woman who made his grey life greyer. It is possible that in time she would have dragged him down to her own level, for he was gradually turning to beer for consolation and taxing the limits of a naturally iron head; but ere that time came the liquor broke his wife's constitution even as water stifles flame. Michael was dour and silent for a while, but soon it was as though an actual burden had been lifted from his shoulders, and once again he might be heard erupting snatches of old songs, with a contempt for tune that in its way was almost splendid.

Although a stern and somewhat violent parent his affection and ambition for his sons are real and very strong. One of them is now a smart army sergeant and he talks of working the other into a clerkship. "Charley has all the wits of the pair of 'em," he said to me once, utterly oblivious of Alf's sheepishly grinning presence; "and I'll make something of him yet." If the sons have but inherited a portion of their sire's courage and industry, they should go far.

He has all a sailor's aptitude for odd jobs of every description, and there is nothing of the sort to which he cannot turn his hand. I think that he is never so entirely happy as when called from his regular work to repair the fruits of careless clumsiness with his tool-box and his clever fingers. From glazing to plumbing there is no trade of which he has not a most useful and sufficient smattering. Thirty years' good service have relaxed stern rules for him, and some fraction of his time and skill is devoted to the cooking of savoury and odorous dishes. As I see him now, it is in the dinner-hour during which he is privileged to stay within the warehouse, and his face is peering through the mist that rises from a dish of Irish stew, whose onions seem almost to find voice and cry aloud.

I will call him Peter, the last of the five whom I have chosen for this sketch, the only one of them who has turned to the first true rest that the majority of London's toilers may ever know. A

tall stout rubicund man, with perhaps the cheeriest, ugliest, most human face that it has ever been my lot to see. For five and forty long years had he worked, man and boy, in the warehouse; a man should sleep soundly after such a spell. Although never really well in his later years, and in addition intensely nervous about himself, he yet contrived to maintain a willing courteous cheeriness that never failed. His was the pawkiest humour that I have ever known, lit by the quaintest flashes of genial cynicism. He professed to believe in the good faith of few, and yet he liked all men and was liked by all. It was to him that all came for prudent counsel from the garnered stores of his long experience, and it was ever given willingly and with a certain curious worldly wisdom that was entirely his. He was a hardened gambler in a small way, as are many of London's workers, and it was seldom that an important race was run without the risk of one or more of his hard earned shillings. He was without doubt a poorer man in consequence, but it is to be feared that the spirit of gambling is ingrained in the English race. Also, it is little surprising that men who lead grey fighting lives should turn with eagerness to the gleam of excitement that occasional betting offers, even although they are well aware that the game must be a losing one. Perhaps the joy that is felt, when such a people's hero as brave old Victor Wild rolls home with countless humble shillings staked upon his chance, almost compensates for many a past disappointment and small luxury foregone. At the least, they know how to lose, these Londoners, and I shall always think of Peter as a great-hearted sportsman and true gentleman, for all his apron and his roughened hands. May the earth lie light above him!

They are a people worth knowing, these men who wring their bread from London's grudging hands, of whose countless thousands I have striven to sketch but five. They marry young with but little thought, as a rule, and from that day their lives are a grim relentless struggle, in which joy and pleasure find but little place. And yet, with but few exceptions, they are strangely brave and cheerful through it all. Now that I look back upon the men whom I have known, it is their courage and their uncomplaining cheeriness that are clearest in my mind, that are most wonderful to those who know the hardships of their lives.

J. B.



## A BOOKSELLER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

IN that famous panel of the Academy at Florence on which Fra Lippo Lippi has depicted the Heavenly City, there appears, "out of a corner when you least expect," the humbly mundane figure of the painter himself, justifying with the proud modesty of authorship (*iste perfecit opus*) his intrusion on the celestial citizens. Just so, during those very years when Fra Lippo too often roused the midnight echoes between the tall houses of the Florentine streets, just so, in that dramatic piece which we call the Italian Renaissance, there emerges upon the crowd of princes and scholars who are its brilliant protagonists, the homely figure of a bookseller,—Vespasiano da Bisticci, the first bookseller in Florence, no more and no less—carrying in his hand his volume *VITE DI UOMINI ILLUSTRI*, the offering of his regard (and perhaps a little also of his vanity) to the memory of the famous scholars who were his customers and his friends.

Seeing [he says] how often the reputation of great men has perished because no one placed their deeds on record in letters, (for had not Livy and Sallust lived in the days of Scipio Africanus, the fame even of that great man must have died with him) I, although writing is foreign to my vocation, having seen much of the many notable men with which this age has blossomed, have written memorials of them in the form of a brief record.

The shrewd and genial bookseller has left us some very vivid sketches of his famous clients as well as an incidental brief abstract of the contemporary history in which many of them bore so prominent a part. He is no profound critic of the characters and motives of his subjects. He is not concerned to find fault with any one, and prefers to avoid matters of offence, although a significant hint sometimes betrays that he sees more

than he will say. Perhaps his portraits are a little flattering ; but then men are apt to show the best of themselves to genial, candid natures like his. There are no bounds to his admiration for saints and scholars, the poor in this world's goods but rich in spirit ; and to serve God and letters, " to give alms for the love of God and buy books," sums up in his gospel the whole duty of man.

An insatiable and consuming curiosity about all things in heaven and earth, including your neighbour's business, was the mark of a true Florentine, and the worthy Vespasiano was an inveterate gossip and had a gossip's retentive memory for trifles. He knew the extent to a guest of Messer Piero de Pazzi's famous dinners ; noted how Messer Velasco of Portugal wasted his time at Bologna reading Petrarch's sonnets instead of his lessons ; and did not forget the exact figure of Ser Filippo di Ser Ugolino's salary, which he ingenuously confesses might be read, for the trouble of looking, in the treasury accounts. But the gossip of to-day is history to-morrow, and we are much obliged to his inquisitiveness. What would we not give to have had such a retentive gossip at the elbow of Shakespeare, or to overhear through such a medium Jonson or Raleigh's first-night criticism of *LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST* ! Artless and garrulous writers like Vespasiano do us the inestimable service of portraying not so much what their contemporaries really were, but what they thought themselves and their neighbours thought them, which is so much more interesting and significant. Just because he has but little sense of proportion and does not stay to sift his matter critically he often gives us the one necessary and sufficient detail, the apparently trivial touch which galvanises the picture into life.

Not the least life-like of his portraits is that which, while portraying others, he involuntarily draws by the way of his own attractive self as the strenuous apostle of humanism, owing his small Latin and less Greek entirely to " frequenting and assiduously conversing with several learned men." His pleasant humour and tolerant temper, his love of fine sights, " things worthy to be seen," his urgent piety and the " peculiar insight into divine things," which so commended his letters to Gianozzo Manetti, betray themselves on every page.

The serviceable bookseller lived on a footing of considerable intimacy with his customers ; corresponding, dining, and walking

with them, staying with them at their country villas and often acting as intermediary between them and Cosimo de' Medici's accessible and well-furnished purse. This intimacy was the greater because the worthy man knew his place, combining a desire to be all things to all men and to give offence to none with that fervent regard for rank and position which Florentines so easily reconciled to their democracy. The cordial tone of their letters to him marks their affection for his person. "Your letters," writes Donato Acciajuoli, using and acknowledging a silver pen just sent him by Vespasiano, "were most welcome and entertaining to us, but still more so will be your visit which we all anticipate with great pleasure." With the exception of his brothers and certain companions of his boyhood, writes Donato's brother Jacopo, "there is no one to whom I would so willingly do a service as to you." And Gianozzo Manetti, however pressed for time during his frequent diplomatic embassies, always contrived to maintain a regular correspondence with his "excellent and particular friend," diversifying intimate reports of the business he was engaged in with lengthy discourses on such subjects as the salvation of unbaptised infants, and the chronological precedence of Moses and Homer. To us insufferably tedious, to Vespasiano, who like most of his contemporaries seems to have been inaccessible to boredom, nothing was more acceptable than the receipt of such letters, except the inditing of similar epistles on his own account; witness a homily on free will which he addressed, in the ordinary way of correspondence, to Filippo Pandolfini and commended to the careful attention of its recipient as being "full of most weighty maxims." In fact his patrons recognised in Vespasiano something more than a merely assiduous tradesman. "A most careful reader and judge of books" Zembino of Pistoia calls him, in a Latin compliment which must have vastly gratified the honest bookseller, and pays a tribute to his knowledge of all notable Greek, Latin, and Hebrew works and their authors. Nor was it a small thing to be the first bookseller in Florence when Florence was the source and centre of European culture, and the retailing of ready-made books over a counter was not the sum of bookselling skill.

The classical revival lent a new importance to the book-trade, by making book-collecting not only a fashionable caprice, but a literary passion. To the scholars of the fifteenth century classical

culture appealed as the most valuable asset in life, and its most intimate legacy was the literature of which the mouldy parchments lay hidden in damp convent libraries and forgotten church chests, almost inviolate as yet and to be had for the seeking. At any moment a lucky chance might reveal to the searcher's hand some lost masterpiece of classical letters, some gloss or commentary of the early Christian fathers, known till then only by report or in still more tantalising fragments. Pope Nicholas the Fifth employed a small army of experts to hunt up manuscripts for the Vatican library, and even sent one Enoch of Ascoli to Denmark on a fruitless search for a complete Livy, of which recurrent and delusive rumours had tantalised scholars since Petrarch's time. The agents of the great commercial houses, especially of the Medici, ecclesiastics travelling in the service of the Pope, distinguished humanists sent on diplomatic errands by their various Governments, vied with each other in an eager search through every accessible library in Europe. Messer Poggio Bracciolini of Florence for instance, travelling as a papal secretary to the Council of Constance, was infinitely more concerned with the ransacking of German convent libraries by the way, than with doctrinal disputes or the limits of papal supremacy. Six of Cicero's orations, the complete works of Quintilian, the ARGONAUTICON of Valerius Flaccus, Lucretius's *DE RERUM NATURA*, Cornelius Celsus's *DE MEDICINA*, and the *DE TEMPORIBUS* of Eusebius with additions by Jerome and Prosper, not to mention less noteworthy discoveries, amply repaid his zeal, and attest the thoroughness of his methods. True his gall rose at the heedless ignorance which left such treasures to rot among heaps of waste paper, or as at Sanct Gallen "in a hole not fit for a condemned criminal," but, after all, this neglect was his opportunity, and to despoil "these barbarians" seemed less than venial. Messer Poggio at least did not hesitate. We are induced to wonder whether a certain volume on Roman antiquities by the anonymous author of *EINSIEDELN* was the only one that left its transalpine home hidden in Messer Poggio's ample sleeves. What about the *SYLVÆ* of Statius, and the mouldy manuscript containing two of Cicero's speeches which he found—but did not leave—at Cluny? How did Messer Nicolao Nicoli come by that manuscript of Tacitus, which Boccaccio had copied some half-century ago in the Monte Cassino library, and which the usually liberal Nicolao was so chary of lending? But we, at any rate,

rebuke them with a bad grace, for who but we profit by their piracies? Messer Nicolao's Tacitus is now one of the treasures of the Laurenziana, and the *Sylvæ* and those speeches of Cicero the search for which preoccupied Petrarch, have been preserved for us in Messer Poggio's questionably appropriated manuscripts. And it must be conceded to their credit that if they were unscrupulous they were also untiring. When a manuscript could neither be borrowed nor obtained—in Poggio's own delightful phrase, "*vel vi vel gratia* (by force or favour)"—it had perforce to be copied on the spot. Poggio sat gallantly down for thirty-two days before the Sanct Gallen Quintilian and copied it with his own hand in the fine antique character which in his youth had often earned his daily meed of "books and other things." Aurispa in Constantinople sold his clothes to pay for his treasure-trove of books, and Poggio himself having for three years vainly bullied and cajoled the tenacious owners of a coveted Tacitus, embarked all undiscouraged on a fresh campaign of importunities.

Copies of these works, so lately retrieved to the uses of scholarship, and Latin translations of Greek manuscripts,—for a knowledge of Greek was still not common even among scholars—though indispensable of course to libraries of any pretensions, did not exhaust the current demand for books. Most of the great libraries, as Vespasiano records, were based on a scheme or plan drawn up for the use and at the request of Cosimo de' Medici by Thomas of Sarzana, the future Nicholas the Fifth, and one of the first bibliographical authorities of the day. The main categories represented in this are as follows: the works of classical writers, poets, historians and philosophers in the originals and in translations; Hebrew works; the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew and in various translations, with commentaries and glosses; the works of the Christian fathers, besides those of modern theologians; modern histories and chronicles, and prose and poetical works in Latin and the vulgar tongue. Of such works accurate and well-written copies were but rarely to be found in the market and had therefore to be made to order; and this was Master Vespasiano's province in the art and craft of bookmaking. Even efficient copyists could not be had for the asking, especially the more highly esteemed Italians, whose services stood in a request which had gone far to turn their heads. More competent, it is true, than their predecessors, whose inefficiency so vexed the soul of Petrarch, their

pretensions had risen quite disproportionately to their merits. But Vespasiano, having many rich clients, able and willing to pay even exorbitantly for adequate work, was at a considerable advantage in dealing with them. The worthy bookseller was ill to please, not only in the matter of a correct and fine script, but also with illustrations and bindings and the quality of his parchments. We have a letter in which he excuses himself to Piero de' Medici for some delay in completing a Livy to his order (the book still bears witness in the Laurenziana to Vespasiano's skill and taste), because certain leathers which have been dyed for him have not turned out to his liking. Thanks to his painstaking and upright dealings the contents of his shop attained quite a European celebrity. Popes, kings, princes, and learned men from all countries turned their steps to him. Eugenius the Fourth, Alfonso King of Naples, Matthew Corvinus of Hungary, the Sforzas of Pesaro, the German Cardinal of Cusa, Cardinal Bessarion, the humanist bishop Graham of Ely (whose British patronymic defied the resources of Vespasiano's orthography), and the young Cardinal Jacopo of Portugal (whose brief and brilliant memory is enshrined in the Portuguese chapel at San Miniato) all at one time or another had dealings with him. And the best and most regular of his customers were Cosimo de' Medici, Nicholas the Fifth, and Federigo, the scholarly duke of Urbino.

For Cosimo, "the shrewd reader of men's faces, chary of speech, but prodigal of deeds, by nature inclined to ponder great things," Vespasiano entertained a sincere regard, as well as much appreciation of the enigmatic rejoinders, "well spiced with salt," with which Cosimo was wont to bewilder his interlocutors. Cosimo shared to the full the desire to make books "a common good to all," which was not the least pleasant feature of book-collecting in the fifteenth-century. When the private library of the Medici came into the hands of the Signory, after Piero's flight from Florence, so large a number of books were out on loan that they had to be reclaimed by public proclamation. And to endow public libraries was very much in the fashion. Cardinal Bessarion founded a library of Greek manuscripts at Venice, as the meeting-place of East and West; Palla Strozzi planned, but was prevented by his exile from accomplishing, a library in Santa Trinità. Nicolao Nicoli not only built and furnished an accessible library for Boccaccio's books, which had



remained useless in their packing-cases since their bequest to San Spirito, but also bequeathed his private collection (which, Vespasiano says, in his lifetime seemed to be kept more for others' than for his own use) to found a public library in Florence. At his death they were rescued from his creditors and given in charge to the Dominicans at San Marco, thanks to the active intervention of Cosimo, who continued to take a benevolent interest in this memorial to his old friend, presenting many additions to the collection, and making Vespasiano hunt up volumes for it among his own books. Vespasiano, too, made presentations of several volumes to the San Marco library, and we find his name among the borrowers in one of its books. Cosimo could devise no better return for the hospitality of his Venetian exile than to present a library to the monastery of San Giorgio in Alga, and he also provided libraries for the abbeys which he built at Mugello and Fiesole. Commissioned by him Vespasiano had the necessary books specially made by some thirty or forty scribes, whose pens could not run fast enough for Cosimo's masterful impatience.

The accession to the papal throne of Nicholas the Fifth brought Vespasiano an even better customer than Cosimo. Thomas of Sarzana, the "poor priest with never a bell-ringer to his service," whose elevation to the papacy astonished no one so much as himself, had known Vespasiano well, as a frequent and popular visitor in the learned circles of Florence. The genial Pope, who had a good word at everybody's service, made his old acquaintance heartily welcome when that worthy made a not quite uncommercial appearance at the papal court. He dismissed his court in order to chat at his ease with his visitor, appointed him his bookseller and no doubt discussed with him his plans for the revival of the library. The papal library had existed almost as long as the papacy itself, and in very early days was noted for the liberality of its gifts and loans. The first of English scholars, the Venerable Bede, borrowed manuscripts from the Lateran; and gifts from Rome formed the nucleus of Saint Augustine's library at Canterbury as well as of Benedict Biscop's at Wearmouth. But the vicissitudes of Roman disaffection and the removal of the papal residence to France dealt hardly with the library; if little went to Avignon, still less came back, nor did Eugenius the Fourth on his return to Rome do much to remedy its impoverishment. At this opportune

moment, when enormous sums were poured into the treasury at the Jubilee, a lucky chance placed, in the person of Nicholas the Fifth, an expert book-collector on the papal throne. Thomas of Sarzana's lack of pence had continually thwarted the gratification of his ruling passion, and Nicholas was only too eager to indemnify himself for the long tale of straitened years. Were he ever rich, the poor priest was wont to say, he would spend his money on books and buildings, and the Pope was as good as his word. During his reign hammers clinked and pens scraped in every corner of Rome, and his unrestrained generosity to men of letters made the papal court a veritable humanist land of cockayne. Whilst his agents hunted for manuscripts, and Vespasiano's scribes were busy in his service, distinguished scholars wrote for him original works, and Latin versions of important Greek texts, to the inspiring tune of the Pope's lavish remuneration. Manetti received from him a pension of six hundred ducats over and above his salary as papal secretary, Guerino was paid fifteen hundred florins for his translation of Polybius, and Perotto five hundred for a Strabo.

If we may believe Vespasiano, and we must at least concede to the Pope's bookseller every opportunity to form a correct estimate, the library reached a total of five thousand volumes, an enormous figure for the time, when the Visconti library at Pavia and the Louvre each contained about a thousand volumes, and Nicolao Nicoli left eight hundred. "Never since the days of Ptolemy," cries the bookseller with enthusiasm, "have half so many books been brought together." Under Nicholas's immediate successors the library remained much as he left it. Calixtus the Third had little sympathy with and less approval for his predecessor's classical tastes, though there may be small foundation for Vespasiano's malicious story of his reckless dispersal by gift and loan of hundreds of priceless manuscripts. For Vespasiano shared the disgust with which his clients beheld in their patron's seat a jurist "who had no knowledge of letters and was only accustomed to handle pamphlets of common paper." Pius the Second, though as good a humanist as Nicholas himself, had no money to spare for superfluities, and Paul the Second's thoughts and means were entirely absorbed by the Turkish war and his many nephews. Not until the reign of Sixtus the Fourth did the library enter on a fresh lease of prosperity, and was at last installed in a manner worthy of its quality,

a task which Nicholas had postponed for the conversion of the Vatican into a huge fortress, the better to protect his somewhat timorous person from the Roman mob.

If he lost an excellent customer in Nicholas the Fifth, Vespasiano gained one almost as profitable in the Duke of Urbino. Vittorino da Feltre's brilliant pupil is not the least interesting figure in Vespasiano's portrait-gallery. Soldier, scholar, and statesman, Federigo shared the versatility of an age when men played, and played well, so many simultaneous parts. He plied his inglorious trade of *condottiere* with as much skill and far more honesty than his contemporaries; he was a humane and capable ruler of his tiny hill-set principality, and a scholar and art-critic of no mean parts. Vespasiano pays a glowing tribute to the consideration and patronage which he bestowed on artists and men of letters. Perforce a less lavish, he was also a more discriminating patron than Nicholas, whose taste for fine books and fine buildings he shared. His palace at Urbino, one of the glories of renaissance architecture, was the talk of the day; and its fine library cost him, at Vespasiano's estimate, over thirty thousand ducats, and was the favourite hobby of his not very frequent leisure for fourteen years. He drew up with his own hand directions for the librarian, a functionary whom he desired good-looking, good-natured, good-mannered, and ready of speech. He was to keep the books in such order that any volume might be found on the instant, to air the rooms and the books and preserve the latter from damp, insects, and "the hands of the inept, ignorant, and unlearned," and to show them assiduously, pointing out their beauties to the learned and to people of position, allowing the merely curious visitor no more than a casual glance. He was also to make and carefully keep a list of loans: "All as done," Federigo concludes with his usual gracious courtesy, "by the present skilful and assiduous librarian, Messer Agabito."

Alas for Messer Agabito's pleasant days! The studies and library with the north light and wide view are empty now, for the books are in the Vatican, and even the decorations by Melozzo of Forlì and Justus of Ghent are for the most part scattered or lost. Two of Melozzo's panels, representing music and rhetoric, have even found their way to our National Gallery. A contemporary tourist, whose admiration for the palace and "its jewel the fine library" inspires him with

some very prosaic verse, was at the pains to count the tallies attached to the presses, and gives the number of volumes as some seven hundred, "twice as many as there are days in the year." "In this library," comments our good bookseller, "all the books are of most excellent quality, all written by hand, not one printed, of which he would have been ashamed, all elegantly illuminated, and not one but is written on kid parchment." And he goes on to relate how, shortly before Federigo's last campaign, he carried to him at Urbino the catalogues of all the chief Italian libraries and even of the library of the University of Oxford; and how a careful comparison of them all revealed the superior completeness of the Urbino library, "all the others sinning in this, that they possess many copies of the same work, but do not have, as is the case at Urbino, complete and perfect sets of the works of each author."

Most distinguished travellers who wished to see something of Florentine literary life and carry home some of the treasures of Florentine bookshelves found their way to Vespasiano's shop; and while his scribes carried out their orders Vespasiano waited on them as a delightfully talkative guide about Florence, introduced them to his learned clients and took them to hear some famous lecturer at the University or Santa Trinità, or carried them off on a visit to the great Cosimo at Carreggi. The humanist Earl of Worcester, John Tiptoft himself, was not too proud to see the sights of Florence hand in hand with his bookseller. The Florentine booksellers plied their trade in a conveniently central situation near the Badia and the Bargello—the palace of the Podestà—and here Vespasiano's shop was the daily resort of a learned and book-loving coterie. Lawyers and officials on their way from the palace, scholars coming from the disputations at Santa Trinità, from Filelfo's Dante readings in the Cathedral or from visiting Frate Ambrogio, the famous humanist scholar and friar at Santa Maria degli Angioli, were accustomed to step in to hear the latest literary gossip, handle the newest books, and continue, with much noise and strife of learned tongues, the discussions of the cloister, to the no small edification of the attentive bookseller. Thither came merry, argumentative Messer Gianozzo Manetti, whose great head defied the stock sizes of the Florentine cap-makers, and whose unruffled temper and courtly manners betokened an enviable immunity from such trifling ailments as try the nerves

of ordinary men. Messer Gianozzo took credit to himself for knowing by heart the Epistles of Saint Paul, St. Augustine's *DE CIVITATE DEI*, and Aristotle's *ETHICS*, of which his translation was in every library of note. The conversion of the Jews was his special hobby, and he had learned Hebrew to the sole end of "reproving their perfidy in their own tongue." His humanistic studies, which would have absorbed less versatile and sedulous minds, left him leisure to serve his city in many capacities by his "eloquent tongue and upright and dispassionate judgment."

Nicolao Nicoli's scrupulously dainty presence in his fine crimson gown was also frequent in Vespasiano's shop, bringing the latest accounts of Messer Poggio's book-hunting expeditions, or the great news of the discovery of Cicero's *RHETORIC* in a long-unopened church-chest at Lodi. For Nicolao, whose sedentary habits and love of old china, crystal, and Greek marbles did not comport with arbitrary displacements, let his more mobile friends dispose freely of his fortune and his learning, and was always spurring them on to fresh activities. He, as well as Manetti, had deserted a remunerative business for a literary career, and he had spent an ample patrimony on books and in aid of needy scholars. When in this way his land was gone and money spent, Cosimo, that complete Mæcenas, simply invited him to draw at will on the Medici bank; and Nicolao, in the spirit of noble acceptance which Dante counts among the civic virtues, as simply and perhaps no less admirably accepted. The most erudite member of the circle, and the most quarrelsome, was Leonardo Bruni, the great Latinist and the historian of Florence, whose European reputation attracted visitors from far countries solely to see and speak with him. Hardly less formidable was Messer Poggio Bracciolini, pungent of tongue and pen, delighting the good bookseller with his many jests, and frightening everyone with the remarkable resources of his invective, which spared neither those who offended his susceptible person, nor unprincipled borrowers who neglected to return his books. Even San Bernardino, inspiring one of those religious revivals, which like everything new and exciting could always arouse the unstable ardour of the Florentines, found time to drop in at Vespasiano's and linger to discuss with Manetti the sin of usury, against which he had preached that morning in the Duomo, "damning us all," as Gianozzo said, rallying him merrily.

From the palace came Ser Filippo di Ser Ugolino, the incorruptible lawyer of the Republic, a dignified figure in his long purple gown, with his humorous smile and terse speech, "short and quick and full of high sentence." More rarely Palla Strozzi, rich, handsome and learned, would come from the home which wife and children made the happiest in Florence, until death and exile fell so heavily on its prosperity. Both men served the Republic "with head and fortune," and both met with the too frequent reward of Florentine patriotism from the city whose extremity of ingratitude could never disarm the love of her sons. Vespasiano's picture of Palla Strozzi, in his uncomplaining exile, "turning to his books as to a desired haven," and of Ser Filippo at the Abbey of Settimo, patiently teaching the novices Latin, "in separate lessons, because one was more advanced than the other," is typical of that disinterested love of learning which was the best inspiration of the humanists. When we recall their shameless rapacity, their overweening pretensions and unscrupulous polemics, it may seem almost absurd to call them disinterested; but in the exercise of their profession of letters they were not venial. They never tampered with their literary ideals, and they had a passionate love of learning for its own sake. Like the inhabitants of Utopia they "supposed the felicity of this life to consist in the free liberty of the mind and garnishing of the same."



## THE EVOLUTION OF THE HOME

ONE likes to believe that the cave-dweller of the Stone Age sitting outside his cave in the cool of the evening after a satisfactory (if indigestible) supper of underdone meat, may have had in his mind's eye a possible future in which caves would be less dark and damp, more roomy, and less liable to the unwelcome intrusion of wild beasts. Of a truth, he was not comfortable. A haunting picture once exhibited in a London gallery showed him turning the corner to his cave and coming suddenly, with a hideous expression of fear, on a lion who, on his very doorstep so to say, had already half devoured his wife. Such things called loudly for reform.

The solidity of the cave, its immovable nature, has never been surpassed. Neither the winds of heaven nor the earthquakes of the soil had any effect on it; and the first artificial cave raised above ground, no doubt a marvel of ingenuity in its way, must have been considered a very flimsy affair in comparison, the second storey a daring flight not to be thought of as yet without a shudder. Minor improvements, say a hole in the roof for the escape of smoke, can only have been practicable in few cases; but the first man who managed to knock out such a hole was the creator of the domestic hearth and all its attending blessings. He rejoiced in that feeling of comparative ease and comfort which ages after him would culminate in the song of HOME, SWEET HOME, though in his days it would still have been singularly premature. He did not overcome the nuisance of the smoky chimney; but he led the way, and some day we may settle it.

Without in the least discrediting the immense importance of the theory of evolution, it may be admitted that the conclusion was more or less unavoidably indicated by what we see around us everywhere. There does not appear much in common between such a hole rudely knocked out, and a chimney with

monumental marble, brass fittings, and ormolu glass, not to speak of the central gilt clock and flanking bronzes, or vases, that now form an indispensable part of it ; yet the one is no more than a gradual evolution of the other, and little as we may understand it, the direction taken by such an evolution has probably never been within our choice or discretion. In examining the minute cell of a budding leaf before it has grown to an individual shape, the highest power of the microscope cannot detect the slightest indication of the coming form. The cell of an oak-leaf is indistinguishable from that of the chestnut-leaf ; there is only the same cell-wall, circulating protoplasm, and nucleus to be seen in both ; the division and multiplication of cells proceed equally and uniformly in both, and yet there is a mysterious power, unseen, inscrutable, which at a certain given point forces the one cell to multiply in the shape of the oak-leaf while the other must become the elongated fan-like leaf of the chestnut. It is matter for congratulation that this latent, unknown power, equally strong and inscrutable in us, has not driven us in the direction of the snail and made us carry our homes with us ; the Arab who folds his tent and silently vanishes away is but the exception that proves the rule. Fortunately Nature has intended us to build stationary dwellings like the coral insect, though in too many cases less solid. What precise place or function the jerry-builder holds in this evolutionary process or scheme it would be invidious to investigate ; it should be enough for us to remember that in Nature nothing is unnecessary.

Before we proceed to examine the different evolutions in architecture and comfort which have resulted from this building instinct, mention should be made of another useful individual who assists us in our choice, the house-agent to wit. He cannot have existed, even in a rudimentary stage, in the Stone Age. They did not probably, in that dim past, change their cave every three years or oftener, and we know nothing of the tenure on which such property was held. Given the comparative scarcity of caves, when the family increased and a roomier dwelling became imperative, it may have been necessary to massacre the holders of a larger tenement, "possession on completion of massacre" being then the recognised condition of transfer. With the softening of manners and morals, a persuasive go-between was urgently needed, and the house-agent was evolved, his duties in the earliest days being more in the

nature of a reinforcement, his powers of reasonable persuasion not unconnected with a club.

Useful and remunerative as the calling seems to be, not every-one is fit for it. Unlimited optimism is required in its pursuit; the faintest shadow of pessimism must not fall on the three years' agreement or it will not be signed. The successful agent should wear rose-coloured spectacles and should advertise the vacant pillar of St. Simeon Stylites as a compact little residence in a quiet neighbourhood. Did not a celebrated auctioneer once reluctantly admit that the only drawback he knew to a country-house he had to let was the noise made at night by the night-ingales? When a house is old he develops unexpected antiquarian tastes and predilections; when it is new the same man scorns the discomforts of antiquity. In his enthusiasm he sometimes forgets the meaning of the English language, as when the other day he advertised a house as "replete with hot and cold water."

House-hunting, with or without his aid, is a troublesome business, the choice being so abundant in general and so restricted in particular, for we are more difficult to please than the hermit-crab who makes himself at home in the first shell he finds untenanted. An Irish cabin of one room would suit very few; on the other hand very few want a palace of a hundred or a thousand rooms. However splendidly it may be furnished and upholstered, the smallest palace is a barrack compared to a snug little home in town or country. Who would like to live in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg, on the roof of which, when some structural alterations were contemplated, the architect found a small village encamped in wooden sheds, the proud Imperial family living in state inside having not the slightest knowledge of the teeming life overhead? Who would quite enjoy the home offered by the Vatican at Rome, which contains about sixteen thousand rooms? It must be obviously easy to lose count in such a mighty maze. It suggests the bewildering thought whether somebody once felt cramped in a home with only fifteen thousand rooms, and added another thousand for more breathing-space. Unpopular rulers have often slept night after night in different bedrooms for fear of assassination; a nervous pope could thus sleep in a new room night after night and only return to the first after forty weary years. This fanciful calculation gives a better idea of the insensate vastness of such palaces than any figures of dimensions

could convey. How thankful we must be that, even after the most unlimited dinner, we have no difficulty in finding the drawing-room, no risk of wandering helplessly in such a gigantic labyrinth perhaps for years after losing our known bearings. The proud possessors of such astounding edifices generally make for themselves a hearth and home in some outlying corner of the brick or marble wilderness, a corner they know by heart and can find without the aid of the mariner's compass, much after the manner in which meaner mortals in a too large or draughty room make themselves a comfortable corner by means of screens.

History records many instances of the makeshifts forced upon royal personages in olden times by the inconveniences of their homes or palaces. When they travelled from one to the other it was customary to send in advance horses and sumpter-mules laden with the necessary hangings and carpets. Often the living rooms, if many, were very small; the supper-room of Mary Stuart at Holyrood Palace, from which Riccio was dragged to his death, was hardly large enough to hold a table, and was found inconveniently small on the night of the murder. The table and the candles were at once upset, and if Lady Argyll had not snatched one up as it fell and held it up to see foul play, they would have had to murder the poor Italian in the dark. The house of Kirk o'Fields (which, to be sure, was not intended for a royal residence) was so inconvenient that the sanitary arrangements were shocking even for that time; and a door had to be taken off its hinges and put on the top of a bath to provide more accommodation for Queen Mary and King Darnley. As the gunpowder was already stored in the lower storey, and it was Mary's intention to blow up hearth and home, house and husband in the night, the inconvenience was only temporary. The furniture went up with the husband, and the only thing saved was a much prized silken bedquilt which the Queen took the precaution to remove a few hours before the explosion. This cruel fact would be absolutely incredible if the Casket Letters left any doubt of the ghastly truth.

The contradictions of human nature are amazing and inexplicable; this wonderful and fascinating woman, who made such short and fell work of hearth and home, was yet in other ways so truly feminine that in presiding over her Privy Council she always worked at some small womanly embroidery to keep her-

self in countenance. In this she was followed by the last Mary of her unfortunate race, the wife of William the Third, whose fancy-work, in what we should now call crochet or Berlin wool, was, oddly enough, after her death praised by Bishop Burnet in his funeral sermon as one of her most distinguished virtues. This absurd bathos or anti-climax should not however blind us to the truth that domestic virtues such as these can make a home of the most inconvenient dwelling,—let our antimacassars, chimney-valances, chair-covers, doyleys, and so forth, testify to the fact, for which we are not always sufficiently thankful. Our homes, such as they may be, large or small, are little better than caves if no woman presides over them and brightens them with little feminine touches and fancies. We men are apt to sneer at these adornments, but in the way of making a home every little helps, as the condemned man said when he asked the bishop for his prayers.

Domesticated in the proper sense the Queen of Scots could not be called. Her views on separation or divorce were too thorough to please the average husband ; but she was a veritable factory for fancy-work. She even embroidered petticoats for her implacable enemy Elizabeth ; indeed, she worked so many that at last the English queen took the ungracious course of not thanking her royal cousin for them any more in order to stop the supply.

With a sense of relief we may leave the consideration of palaces, more or less inconvenient, bloodstained, or ghost-haunted, as being after all abnormal homes of remote interest to the average citizen. The family ghost does not often haunt the semi-detached villa ; no White Lady walks on their narrow stairs or landings, and with some few exceptions the suburban villa is now the recognised average type of human dwellings, being easily constructed. No architectural knowledge is required : anyone can build one, that is, if he starts with a bow-window ; without this indispensable preliminary, success would be problematic and confusion might ensue. Shoulder to shoulder, in rows like well-drilled soldiers, they gradually encroach upon the space once occupied by the mansion with park-like grounds or the lordly castle of yore. No doubt what we gain in comfort we lose in romance ; we have, as Mr. Meredith says, exchanged the sky for a ceiling. No one knows where Joyeuse Garde once stood, but rows of semi-detached

villas may now occupy eligible building-sites in the trackless realms of Lyonesse, the enchantment long forgotten. It is well if Merlin Avenue or Launcelot Street faintly recalls the paths where Vivien meditated, not altogether fancy free. If we knew the spot we might well fancy that knights and ladies ride at night through the silent street, for these prosaic homes stand on enchanted ground.

Lo, I must tell a tale of chivalry,  
For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye!

Anyone still blessed with imagination, in this matter-of-fact age, might indeed well think that before cock-crow, before the early milkman's call, before the first glimmer of dawn when the daily paper is thrown down the area, he might see riding through Merlin Avenue milk-white palfreys with silken trappings trailing to the ground, champing and fretting under lovely burdens, hooded falcons perched on delicate wrists, coal-black chargers flecked with flakes of foam, shimmer of satin and lightning of steel, all passing without a sound, ghost-like, a glittering cavalcade disappearing noiselessly in moonbeams or in clouds of dust, —going, going—gone!

Oh for the snows of yester-year! Instead of peacock-pie in glory of brilliant plumage, or maybe of gigantic venison-pasty with a dwarf inside, we have cold mutton for supper. No matter; we now live in a cold mutton age, and Beauty and the Beast (he is on the Sewage Committee), when they came to see us last night, expected nothing else. Beauty liked pickles with it—shrine of the mighty!

What has become of Astolat and of Camelot? Ay, and what will become of Buckingham Palace? The improved steam-laundry, the sweetshop and the young ladies' school that will one day occupy its site are almost as certain as to-morrow's sun. What would King Monmouth have said if a peep into the future had shown him his beautiful home in Soho Square, still standing and, awaiting the final demolition of all things, at present used as offices of a well-known firm of sauce-manufacturers? By a graceful recognition of the *genius loci* his portrait still hangs on the walls of the fine old room with painted ceiling and carved shutters; but it hangs between framed advertisements of mustard and sardines, and looks down with a somewhat astonished air on rows of marmalade jars and bottles of



vinegar. Does the handsome son of Charles the Second and brown Lucy Walters still walk at night in the home of which he was once so proud, and, in the ghostly silence peep curiously into vats of pickles and jars of oil?

It is a long cry from the bare stone cave to the much bedizened room of yesterday; we say yesterday because to-day the swing of the pendulum is very noticeable in the already more refined simplicity of decoration in our homes.

The Japanese, our rivals in the art of war and our masters, some think, in the more gentle arts, have taught us the beauty of simplicity. Their rooms never contain more than one good picture or painted scroll, not more than one spray of blossom or flower in a beautiful vase, only one god, no more, in a dainty shrine in the wall. Their conception of domestic life is the same as ours, with a difference. Where we sit snugly around the lamp, a Japanese family sit through a long dark evening round a dim paper lantern on the floor: of hearth in our sense they have none, merely a brazier with hot ashes to warm frozen fingers at; but the home-circle is for all that a more positive fact with them than it is, for instance, with the Neapolitans, who only sleep in the garret of what was once a palace and live on the doorstep, dining off macaroni in the street.

Climate is, and has always been, the greatest factor in the domestic life of a nation. It has moulded us, made us what we are. In the days of the cave-dweller the English climate was very hot, and the cave made a cool retreat. When the Glacial Period returns once more, when the cap of ice and snow shall extend again over the whole of our islands from Lewis to Ilfracombe, as science tells us to be unavoidable, though too far off to trouble us to-day, our home-life will be changed to meet the altered conditions inseparable from Arctic life. However fashionable it may be now to dine or sup at the restaurant, a time will come when the rigour of the climate will turn our thoughts another way, and the renewed attraction of the hearth will be too powerful to be resisted. The *menu* of reindeer flesh and blubber, even the celebrated Blue Esquimaux Band, will not then seduce us from our own fireside.

MARCUS REED.

## MRS. BOEHM'S PARTY

AMONG the many functions with which, on Wednesday, June 21st, 1815, London society was seeking to mask the sinking at heart that preluded the expected news from the seat of war, there was one party which stood out above all others. This was the dinner and ball given by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Boehm at 16 St. James's Square. Mr. Boehm was a retired merchant of great wealth; his wife was a handsome woman of literary and musical tastes. At their estate of Ottershaw, in Surrey, they had acquired a great reputation for benevolence and hospitality, qualities which gained them the favour of the Duke of York. His Royal Highness made much of them and introduced them to his own circle of friends at Oatlands, and they were thus made free of the best society.

On the night of the 21st, no pains nor expense had been spared to bring about the most brilliant party of the season. The moment was not propitious. Many of society's favourites were absent in Flanders; news of triumph was hourly hoped for, news of disaster as constantly feared; nearly every family of distinction had given toll of its men to the barrier drawn across the path of Napoleon; the air was thick with rumours, the suspense must have been torturing. Nevertheless, Mrs. Boehm's party promised to satisfy the most ambitious of hostesses. She was honoured by the presence of three Princes of the Blood—the Prince Regent and the Dukes of York and Sussex. The advent of the last produced an "incident." The groom of the chambers proclaimed "Their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Sussex and Prince Augustus of Sussex." When the Regent heard this his cheeks flushed, and turning his back he said to his brother of York: "Tell Adolphus from me that if ever he allows that young man to assume that title again, he and I do not speak

to each other." All who heard understood the reason of the words, but to-day they require explanation.

The Duke of Sussex had, in defiance of the Royal Marriage Act, married Lady Augusta Murray, daughter of the Earl of Dunmore,—a marriage which was declared null and void in the following year. Prince Augustus of Sussex was the son of this union. After the death of his father he sought to succeed him in the title ; the case went against him, and he was known as Sir Augustus d'Este, as in his father's lifetime. The trial produced a little romance. His chief counsel was Thomas Wilde, afterwards the first Lord Truro, who in the course of the business won the hand of Emma Augusta, Mademoiselle d'Este, sister of Sir Augustus, a marriage which was the occasion of a clever epigram :

Happy the pair who fondly sigh,  
By fancy and by love beguiled ;  
He views as Heaven his D'Este nigh,  
She vows her fate will make her Wilde.

After the incident the dinner proceeded equably. The ladies went upstairs, and after the customary interval the gentlemen followed. The guests for the ball were already arriving, and, royal permission being graciously accorded, the first quadrille was formed. This dance was of recent introduction, and probably some of the guests had spent the morning practising it. His Royal Highness was in the act of walking to the daïs, when, suddenly, a terrific hubbub was heard in the square. As has been said, everybody was in the throes of expectation ; all were awaiting news, hopeful, yet dreading evil tidings of husbands, sons, brothers, lovers. Rumour had been busy all day. A messenger had arrived at the house of Rothschild with news of a great victory. Watching the house at Ghent where Louis the Eighteenth lodged, he had noticed a military dispatch arrive, had seen its joyful reception by the royal family, had hastened to Ostend, and got away one tide before Wellington's messenger. On the strength of this the Rothschilds indulged in some extensive dealings on the Stock Exchange, and then imparted the news to Lord Liverpool. The latter, after consulting with Vansittart (afterwards Lord Bexley), decided to wait for confirmation ; but the best kept secrets are apt to leak out and to assume extraordinary variations. Sir Robert Wilson ("the bird of ill omen"), dining at Lord Willoughby d'Eresby's that night,

told the gentlemen over their wine that the Allies had been totally defeated, that Napoleon was in Brussels, and had supped with Prince d'Aremberg at the palace. A Cabinet dinner at Lord Harrowby's passed without any divulgence of the Rothschilds' message, but as Lord Liverpool was returning to his residence (Fife House in Whitehall Place), his carriage was stopped by a gentleman who had seen, in Downing Street, a post-chaise dressed in laurel, with French eagles showing through the windows, driven off to Lord Harrowby's. In the chaise was Major the Hon. Henry Percy, son of the first Earl of Beverley. He found Lord Sidmouth in his office, and they went together in pursuit of Lord Liverpool. Major Percy's dispatches were to Lord Bathurst, who was not at Lord Harrowby's, and he demurred to giving them to anyone else; but Lord Liverpool, who had returned, said, "You must come immediately to the Prince Regent." So the three, Major Percy, Lord Liverpool, and Lord Sidmouth, re-entered the chaise, and accompanied by a vast, shouting, exulting crowd, hurried off to St. James's Square, the eagles protruding from the windows as before.

It was the din of this mob that broke in upon the strains of the band just as Mrs. Boehm's guests were preparing for the dance. Everybody was on the tiptoe of expectation, and at the noise in the square all restraints of dignity and etiquette were forgotten. A rush was made for the windows, from which the post-chaise was seen picking its way through a seething mob. Poor Mrs. Boehm! The exultation of patriotism could not drown her grief for the failure of her magnificent party, and the "nasty French eagles" were to her but the symbols of her social disaster: she thought Major Percy might have waited till the next day. From the windows her guests saw a battle-stained soldier leap from the carriage, fight his way through the crowd and rush up-stairs. Dashing through the ball-room, he knelt to the Prince, and laying the eagles at his feet, gasped, "Victory, Sir, victory!" Lord Liverpool said: "I have brought Major Percy, who comes with the news of a great victory for your Royal Highness." "Not Major Percy, but Lieutenant-Colonel Percy," said the Prince, whereupon the ex-Major knelt again and kissed the royal hand. The Regent, the Ministers, and some of the gentlemen retired to read the dispatches. "We have not suffered much loss, I hope?" inquired the Prince. "The loss has been very great indeed," replied Percy, whereupon

says Mrs. Trench : "Ministers and all wept in triumph. The Regent fell into a sort of womanish hysteric. Water was flung into his face. No ! that would never do ! Wine was tried with better success, and he drowned his feelings in an ocean of claret." One by one as the Prince inquired for his friends he received as answers, "killed," "wounded," "missing," until he broke out in the voice of despair,—“Good Heavens ! I seem to have lost all my friends.” The glorious victory had indeed been purchased dearly ; the gay, reckless dandies of that time, as of every time, were no carpet-knights. Could one have looked into the streets of Brussels one would have seen every other house with its doors chalked, *2-blessés* *3-blessés*, *officier blessé*, and so on, and the churches with lines of wounded stretched on the floor.

Lord Alvanley gave the guests the first account of the losses ; he was followed by the Regent, who said with emotion :—“It is a glorious victory and we must rejoice at it, but the loss of life has been fearful, and *I* have lost many friends.” The victory was then announced from the balcony, and we can easily picture to ourselves how first one and then another of Mrs. Boehm's guests hurried off to hide their grief in the bitterness of solitude, with an anguish that could ill brook the triumphant pæan that was beginning to fill the land. The Princes soon retired, and “In less than twenty minutes,” said Mrs. Boehm, “there was not a soul left in the ball-room, but poor dear Mr. Boehm and myself. . . . Even the band had gone. . . . Ladies of the highest rank rushed away like maniacs, in their muslins and satin shoes, some accompanied by gentlemen, others without escort of any kind, all impatient to learn the fate of those dear to them, many jumping into the first stray hackney coaches they fell in with, and hurrying on to the Foreign Office, or Horse Guards.” The disappointed lady evidently thought it somewhat improper to place even such a victory above the glamour of her party, and to set the welfare of the heroes above the *éclat* of St. James's Square.

The sensation spread rapidly, and parties, balls, assemblies, broke up in the like disorder and wild flight for news. Lord Sidmouth hurried round to Lord Ellenborough, who was in bed, but on hearing the intelligence, rang for his servants : “Bring me my clothes,” he cried, “I will not rob myself of one moment's enjoyment of this glorious night.” When Tom Raikes reached Sir George Talbot's he found the Ladies Paget in the

utmost distress as Lady Castlereagh told them of their father's wound. Lord Uxbridge himself had taken it much more coolly. "It was not a bad leg as legs go," he had said as the surgeon cut it away.

Major Percy had hurried to battle in the uniform he had worn at the Duchess of Richmond's ball; he had had no time to change, and was now sinking with fatigue and excitement. The Prince graciously accorded him leave to retire, and he hurried off to his father's house in Portman Square. All night long throngs of anxious enquirers besieged the house, and deprived him of the rest he so longed for, and the impressions of that night so wrought upon him that his mind became deadened to the glory of the brief campaign. His pleading enquirers might have noticed a great dark stain on his breast; it was the blood of a brother-officer killed at his side. When at length he got to bed, he shook out from the folds of his sash fragments of the poor fellow's brains. Colonel Percy never recovered from the fatigues of the campaign and journey, and when, only a few years later, a little girl, afterwards Mrs. Charles Bagot, was lifted up to his bed, it was to kiss a dying man.

About five years after the abandoned ball, the Boehms fell on evil times, and had to give up their fine houses and think no more of costly entertainments. To his credit be it said, the Prince did not forget them. "Since their misfortunes he has redoubled his kindness to them. They have visited Windsor and received such protection that they have taken a house at Brighton for the winter months." So wrote Joseph Jekyll; and again after another five years,—*"I hear the King has given Mrs. Boehm a pension, and promise of apartments at Hampton Court."* The promise was kept, and on a table in her drawing-room there a column twelve inches high, of solid gold, generally attracted the attention of visitors. An inscription stated that it was given by the Prince Regent to Mr. and Mrs. Boehm in commemoration of the fact that the news of the glorious victory of Waterloo had been brought to him under their roof. This object was frequently the introduction of Mrs. Boehm's story of "that dreadful night," when "the most brilliant party of the season" was wrecked by the "indecent haste of Henry Percy," and the "unseasonable declaration of the Waterloo victory."

ALFRED BEAVER.



## THE DAILY LIFE OF AN INDIAN PRINCE

SOME interest must attach, I think, to a narrative of the daily life of the ruling chief of one of the most populous, most prosperous, and most beautiful of the Native States of India, practically written by one of his own confidential secretaries (since deceased) whose very words are to a great extent preserved. It is he who writes this paper, though I have pruned, altered, and added, by permission sought and readily accorded. I was myself British Resident in the States of Travancore and Cochin, and holding at the same time the office of additional member of the Governor General of India's Council, occupied a position which gave me an excellent opportunity of becoming acquainted with the life and conversation of the ruler of a State like Travancore, and of comparing them with those of other ruling chiefs in India. His Highness the Maharajah is one of those rare individuals who want nothing in this world below. He long since received from Queen Victoria the extra guns which made his salute up to the highest possible number. He has therefore no ulterior motive in permitting his secretary to prepare, and myself to edit, a paper which I assured him would be of value and of interest to those in Britain (the vast majority) who have not the remotest conception of what a Hindoo prince is, or what his life is like.

To the student of sociology, no less than to the practical statesman, India presents an interesting and instructive field of study. The impact of the virile, realistic, and progressive West on the quiescent, massive, and slow-moving East has created a ferment which is gradually transforming the national life, ideas, habits, and sentiments. The new spirit, however, has leavened only the upper strata of society. The great masses that form the basis of the social edifice remain passive and inert, clinging to the old ways, ideas, and beliefs, and permeated to the core with

prejudice against all that has not received the sanction of time and religion. They have little sympathy with the party of progress, and its precious cargo of Dead Sea apples. It may be that they are not articulate, but they deeply deplore the tendency of the advanced classes to cut themselves off from the old moorings, to cast away all the trammels of tradition, to obliterate all ancient landmarks, and to transplant at once into India institutions which took root in Europe only in the course of centuries. We thus see in India a struggle between the genius of the East and the spirit of the West, a want of harmony between the wine of modern Europe and the bottles of the ancient Hindoo civilisation. The conflict is inevitable, and under proper conditions an onward movement is predicable ; but the zealous reformer should not, as he too often does, forget how profoundly the genius and spirit of things is affected by the material, social, and spiritual conditions that surround them, and that no general advance is possible unless his ideas run more or less in line with those of the great body of the people.

The feudatory princes and chiefs constitute the apex of Indian society ; and it is a gratifying feature that, while more or less imbued with the modern spirit, they, with a few exceptions, have no sympathy with iconoclastic zeal. The Maharajah of Travancore offers an example of the best type of an Indian prince, who remains an orthodox Hindoo, true to the traditions of his race, but rules his State in a manner in no way conflicting with the broad lines of Western policy.

His Highness Rama Varma, Maharajah of Travancore, Vice-regent upon earth of Vishnu in the Hindoo Heaven, Knight Grand Cross of the Star of India and of the Indian Empire, member of various learned European societies, and possessor of a dozen other titles and dignities, ancient and modern, lay and sacred, and of the maximum salute of twenty-one guns, is the ruler of one of the most picturesque Native States in India, wherein the sun fails not by day, the rain falls in due season, and drought is practically unknown. His family is one of the most ancient in India, reaching back indeed for its origin into mythical and Puranic regions. He is a Kshetraya, or warrior, by caste, and the Marumakkathayam law governs the succession in his family, as it also regulates the inheritance of the bulk of his subjects. Under this system succession follows the line of sisters and children of sisters.

Thus the Maharajah's predecessor was his maternal uncle, whom he succeeded in 1885, and since all the sons of his sisters have predeceased him, the male offspring of two ladies, recently adopted, will eventually succeed to the principality.

The Maharajah is now forty-seven years old. He is somewhat below the middle height and rather slightly made, with handsome, regular features. He does not take part in violent equestrian exercises, and would never wince at the Western world with noble horsemanship as Sir Pertab Singh has done in Rotten Row ; but he plays tennis, golf, billiards, croquet, and badminton, and in all he does he excels, though falling short in these respects of a past-master of games like the Maharajah of Cuch Behar. He received a sound English education and speaks and writes our language perfectly. Indeed Sir Arthur Havelock (ex-governor of more Colonies and British possessions than can be recalled without the aid of books of reference) said the Maharajah reminded him of nothing so much as of a Permanent Under-Secretary of State. He knows several Indian languages other than his own vernacular Malayali. He dresses plainly, wearing no jewels or ornaments, except a little *aigrette* which is always worn by the head of his House. His manner is singularly suave, simple, and courteous. He possesses an equable temperament and those, if any, who have seen him lose his temper have never related the experience. In his habits he is regular and methodical ; he eats moderately, never touches animal food, and scrupulously abstains from all alcoholic drinks. In fact he fulfils all those caste laws and regulations of which London heard so much on the arrival at the coronation of the Maharajah of Jeypore. Local public opinion in Travancore would not yet accept a prince who visited England for one who kept his caste. In this mirror of ancient India a man of high caste has prodigious place, power, and precedence ; but he interferes not at all with the customs of other castes, to respect which is one of the chief ends of his own. And of course custom, and not the Vedas, is the life, law, and religion of the thrones, dominations, principedoms, and powers of India. Upon the coast of Malabar, secluded by sea and mountain from the rest of India and the rest of the world, unaffected by the Mahomedan invasions of the north, its sacred soil only now for the first time in history gashed and scarred by that great leveller, the railroad, you have the nearest possible approach to the conditions

of ancient India,—and you will not have it much longer. Hence it is that the Maharajah of Travancore, in his sacrosanct position, was unable to obey the royal summons to London for the coronation. His Highness does not like leaving his people, nor would they willingly spare him, while he journeyed over the black water to distant, and to them casteless and almost godless, Britain. The Travancore folk, if they heard that Mr. Justice Chandarvarker had said at the Society of Arts, that “caste was alien from the spiritual basis of Hindooism,” would merely remark that not the lecturer, but the reporter must have been at fault. No born Hindoo, whatever his own record or present belief, ever made a more monumentally misleading statement.

The Maharajah is fond of European society, is a member of the local European club, and is believed to admire the character of the ruling race. He certainly inspires those members of it with whom he comes in contact with sentiments of friendship and respect. He is, however, like the late Maharajah of Mysore (an altogether admirable prince), a man of two worlds, the friend and companion of the best Englishmen about him, but none the less determined to maintain cherished customs and associations, and to preserve venerable institutions.

He is intensely and innately religious, while perfectly tolerant of other creeds. One of the striking characteristics of the rulers of this ancient principality is their toleration. According to tradition, Christianity was introduced into Travancore by St. Thomas, the apostle, in the first century of the Christian era. There is no doubt that the Gospel of Christ was preached without let or hindrance from the early centuries, and as the result of this religious freedom Travancore contains to-day a larger proportion of Christians than any other Native State, or Province, in British India. A quarter of the population is Christian, as against an average of about one per cent. throughout the rest of India. The State is at once the most Christian and the most Hindoo part of India. Above the cocoa-nut groves tower tall temples and fantastic fanes; in shady groves are images of demons; beneath the sacred fig-tree the coils of the cobra are reproduced in stone; upon the tamarind trunk a streak of red proclaims the presence of a spirit, whose shadowy answers are waved to worshippers by the graceful boughs of the tree; before the shrine here are rose leaves, there the blood of a cock. The ground is holy, the soil is sacred, and at the same

time there are twelve hundred Christian places of worship, nor are Jews, Parsees, and Mahommedans wanting.

The ruling chief of this community has a most retentive memory, and most industrious habits. He takes deep personal interest in all matters affecting the well-being of his people of all religions, and controls every wheel of the machinery of government, of which he is, in fact, the main-spring. He is generally at work before many of his people have left their beds, cots, floors, hammocks, verandahs and lofts, all of which, and, in the forests, trees and platforms, serve them as resting-places for the night. Simplicity reigns within the palace, and there is a singular absence of the pomp of many menials and much service, which is usual in kings' houses. But see him on a festal day, surrounded by priests, walking slowly to the blare of trumpets upon strewn silver sand, to bathe in the seashore with the image of the god whose agent upon earth he is, and afterwards, clothed in cloth of gold, sparkling with jewels, aloft in his state-coach returning to his palace, and you would say pomp and glory were his attributes, simplicity his foible.

His Highness's family motto is *Charity our Household Divinity*, and his individual text is this from the AIN-I-AKBARI, the record of the greatest of Indian Kings: "The success of the Government, and the fulfilment of the wishes of the subject, depend upon the manner in which a King spends his time." How then does his Highness spend his time?

He rises between four and five, and is at the audience-hall by half-past five. From that hour up to half-past seven he is engaged either in receiving visitors, officials and private individuals, or in answering letters, for the most part with his own hand. At half-past seven he takes his bath. Whatever the season he plunges into cold water from a river running through his capital city of Trevandrum. The bath over, he says his prayers, and then goes to the family pagoda, which is situated only a few hundred yards from his palace. After worshipping at the shrine he takes his breakfast. This is his first meal, for it is contrary to the custom of his House for any member of the reigning family to indulge in even a cup of coffee before bath, prayer, and worship are accomplished. He eats his meal in the orthodox Hindoo fashion, the food being served in gold and silver plates and bowls, all artistically arranged on a large plantain-leaf, the delicate tracery of which exceeds in beauty

the product of any human hands. He eats frugally, and his breakfast, though a great number of dishes are placed before him, is only an affair of a few minutes. While he is at his meal, the Court musicians, who are all Brahmins, sing and play on musical instruments in an adjoining room. Shortly before ten his breakfast is over, and he again goes to business. His private-secretary waits with bundles of papers, and lays before him every letter received. He peruses all the papers himself and passes orders, clearly indicating the tenor of the reply to be sent, and in important cases he himself prepares draft replies. An abstract of all letters received and replies despatched is placed before him the next day, to enable him to see that his orders have been correctly understood. This function occupies him for about two hours, after which he sometimes, but rarely, takes a short siesta. He then reads his newspapers and periodicals, English and Indian, marking and sending to his minister observations regarding any affairs of State. As a rule everything moves slowly in the East, and it is said that there the practice is never to do to-day what you can possibly postpone till to-morrow; but the Maharajah loves the prompt despatch of business, which he practises himself and exacts from all his servants. He censures every officer who is guilty of procrastination, and gives short shrift to those in whom the propensity is deep-rooted. It must not be supposed, however, that all public business races towards a conclusion, for we are not in Utopia but in Travancore.

At two the Maharajah drinks tea, and then again transacts business or reads until four, when he drives to one of his neighbouring residences upon the seashore, or upon some breezy hill. He returns from his drive at half-past five, performs his ablutions, says his prayers, and at seven eats his dinner, which, like the breakfast, is a simple meal selected from innumerable vegetarian dishes. The Hindoos generally have far larger appetites, and the Brahmins particularly are tremendous trenchermen, if vegetarians, who consume snowy mountains of rice with sauces and pickles, can be so described. After dinner light reading occupies the time till nine, when a man who rises at four is glad to go to bed.

The Maharajah is accessible to all, without distinction of class, caste, or creed. He receives Indian visitors at prescribed hours; Europeans see him by appointment. They are received with the utmost simplicity, and after passing the sentry at the palace



gate not a human being as a rule is seen or heard except his Highness. The contrast with the distracting noises of the bazaars, and the bustle of most Hindoo houses is profound.

The chief minister waits upon the Prince twice a week, when important matters of State are discussed. The etiquette of an Eastern Court requires a profuse use of circumlocution and flowers of hyperbole, but the Maharajah encourages his officers to express their opinions freely and without reserve. Conversation is generally held in the Malayali, and the modern graduate, who has learnt to despise his own vernacular, is severely exercised as to a choice of appropriate language in which to address his Highness, whose perfect command of English has not inspired him with any disposition to under-rate the value, dignity, and beauty of his native tongue.

Occasionally he entertains the Europeans at his capital at a dinner which he sits out. He is careful that it should be the best procurable by trains and bearers who have brought ice and other luxuries hundreds of miles ; but he would not touch it for an additional gun to his salute, had he not, as he already has, the highest number possible. When he entertains a Viceroy, which he once did in the person of Lord Curzon, he takes his guest into dinner and sits beside him ; and the Resident takes him in to dinner, when on the occasion of the King's birthday he attends the celebration at the British Residency. The band then plays *God save the King*, and also the Maharajah's anthem, and the Resident's guard remains at attention throughout the mercifully short, though stately, feast. His Highness also gives garden-parties to the European society, when a few, indeed too few, Indian gentlemen are also asked. It is the Europeans who like the number kept down, and they are the losers by this foolish and utterly unreasonable exclusiveness.

The Maharajah, it need hardly be said, is supremely loyal to the throne and to the British Government. Since he cannot himself visit England, he rejoiced the more that he was able to entertain in his State the late Duke of Clarence, by whose early death he was sincerely touched. Towards the King he entertains that feeling of personal loyalty and affection with which the late Queen happily inspired the Indian princes.

The palace is a modest mansion, furnished with simple taste exempt from all extravagance. The floor of the audience-chamber is paved with encaustic tiles, with a carpet in the centre,

and its contents consist of a few chairs, a couch, a writing-table, and two china jars from the Summer Palace at Peking. No expenditure of public money is permitted without the Maharajah's general or special sanction, and this personal attention to economy accounts in no small measure for the satisfactory condition of the finances. A State which owes nothing, and until recently generally had a balance of a year's revenue in hand, is not heard of every day.

It may be observed that an enlightened orthodox Hindoo is neither an idolater, nor a polytheist as commonly understood. He believes in and worships one God, the Supreme Being,—the temples, the images therein, and all the ritual being mere aids to enable him to realise more intensely the all-pervading divine essence. Like every pious Hindoo, the Maharajah has deep faith in the divine guidance of human affairs, and among his numerous titles the first place is given to that of Sri Padmanabha Dasa (servant of Sri Padmanabha), the Patron Deity of his House. He goes through every one of his religious observances without fail; and they are many, and by no means easy. Besides the daily morning visit to the shrine of his Patron Deity, during the festivals, which occur twice a year, he has to visit the pagoda several times a day, take part in the religious procession inside the temple every night, and escort it on foot to the seabeach, a distance of about two miles and a half from the palace. Twice a year he has to go through a ceremony called Bhadradeepom, the lighting of the sacred lamp, which lasts about eight days. Like the spiritual retreat this period is consecrated solely to the service of the soul, and the Maharajah then leads the life of an anchorite, occupying a separate building specially set apart for the occasion. The Dussera, which occurs once a year and lasts for ten days, is a less exacting festival, during which the Maharajah need not fast nor live in seclusion, but he has to attend daily the discussions of a College of Pundits. All the learned men of the land, and many from distant parts of India, attend it, some to display, some to impart, some to acquire knowledge, others to obtain the rewards which are freely given for distinguished learning. A prolonged and vociferous discussion ensues upon questions of logic, metaphysics, grammar, rhetoric and other humanities. Every man who takes part in it is given a small present, and the more profound scholars are rewarded according to their merit. It would interest the Platonic gatherings at

Claridge's to know that the son of Ariston and disciple of Socrates is not forgotten on these occasions, though in Travancore, and perhaps at Claridge's, there is no inscription over the door : *Let no one enter, who is unacquainted with geometry.* The occasion also brings to the capital distinguished native musicians, whose performances form part of the programme, and who are also duly rewarded. The festival closes with a procession to one of the suburban palaces, when the Prince goes in state in his coach drawn by six horses, escorted by his bodyguard and brigade, and attended by all his officers. The state-car was specially made by one of his predecessors in imitation of the vehicle said to be used in heaven by Indra, the Indian Jupiter.

The two previous chiefs of Travancore also were enlightened rulers, but they confined their interests to their own State. Though strictly orthodox and anxious to develop his country on national lines, the present chief keeps himself abreast of his time, and is ready, whenever necessity is shown, to introduce wholesome reforms. For the making of laws and regulations he has established a Legislative Council, composed of officials and non-officials ; he has also inaugurated a scheme of local government by establishing municipalities. In these two cases he has introduced the principle of representation,—one entirely foreign to the Oriental mind. The Maharajah also takes deep interest in female education, the proportion of girls under instruction in the State being larger than anywhere else in British India. This is partly due to the independent position occupied by women on the Malabar coast, where they are able to choose their own husbands and even to change them for good and sufficient reasons. There are at Trevandrum a vernacular high-school, two English high-schools, and a college for women. In the vernacular school pretty girls, clothed in white robes and wearing natural flowers in their hair, may be seen, like so many dusky Hypatias, demonstrating for the benefit of their pupils on the blackboard. Medical aid is provided throughout the State, and in deference to the natural, and by no means blameworthy, prejudices of Hindoo women against being treated by men, an excellent women and children's hospital has been established. The Maharajah has availed himself of the philanthropic scheme inaugurated by Lady Dufferin, and maintained by her successor at Calcutta, by offering liberal scholarships, and in these respects, and indeed in most others, few parts of India are better administered.

Travancore is as rich in natural resources as it is famous for its natural beauties. In Pliny's day its pepper and sandalwood were sold in the markets of Rome ; in the Middle Ages, when the Eastern trade was in the hands of the Moors, Quilon, a seaport forty miles from the capital of the State, was the entrepôt in India, wherein the Chinese traders from the East, and the Arabs and Venetians from the West, bartered their wares. Here Albuquerque built the first Portuguese factory, and here the Dutch followed his lead. The first English factory was built at Anjengo, about twenty miles from the capital, once the home of Sterne's Eliza. English enterprise has recently created and developed the coffee and tea industries, and efforts are being made to exploit the mineral wealth, now that the Government of India has at last made its regulations in this behalf, such as business-men may accept and work with profit. More than half the country is covered with primeval forest yielding a large variety of useful timber, fibre, and dye, and abounding in elephants, tigers, leopards, bison, deer, and an immense variety of smaller game. The Maharajah has constructed the first railway in the State, giving all the land required free of cost, and guaranteeing interest on the outlay.

A paper of this description is more or less authentic in proportion as the subject tells his own tale, or, when personal modesty or feelings of delicacy forbid that course, when the tale is told by someone busied about his person. In one sense then, this is a valuable paper, and I will try not to impair that value, by adding personal opinions and reflections upon the State of Travancore, its ruler, and its administration. For these I have, indeed, in the pages of the English reviews, and elsewhere, already expressed a sincere admiration while I occupied the happy office of British Resident, in which work and sport can be combined, in which pleasure and business can go hand in hand, to an extent hardly conceivable in this hive of incessant industry and exhausting amusement, whence it is an interlude of light, peace, and refreshment to look back upon that pleasant land.

J. D. REES.

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